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Shakespeare

THE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOL. VII.

LONDON:

THE

PLAYS AND POEMS

OF

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE,

WITH THE

CORRECTIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

OF

VARIOUS COMMENTATORS:

COMPREHENDING

A Life of the Poet,

AND

AN ENLARGED HISTORY OF THE STAGE,

BY

THE LATE EDMOND MALONE.

WITH A NEW GLOSSARIAL INDEX.

ΤΗΣ ΦΥΣΕΩΣ ΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΕΥΣ ΗΝ, ΤΟΝ ΚΑΛΑΜΟΝ
ΑΠΟΒΡΕΧΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΝΟΥΝ. *Vet. Auct. apud Suidam.*

VOL. VII.

LONDON:

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MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

HAMLET.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

HAMLET.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

Drury The Theatre closed somewhere about the middle of April 1750 - D.L. reopened 8th Sept - C.G. 15th Sept —

Jan 9 - to 17th 9 - the Courts begin
16 Sept
1749

Thin King acted at Drury
Lane (Barrick's Last Benefit)

1749 Sept 27 - 28 -
Oct - 4 - 5.
Novr 3 - 30 (Recorder, last time)

Woman not to blame in the Case 1st
Lilly for this Benefit (Rapid - Increase)

1750 Jan 9 27.

Feb. 23.

March 29.

Novr 7. 23

1751 April 11. 25.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

THE story is taken from Ariosto, Orl. Fur. b. v. POPE.

It is true, as Mr. Pope has observed, that somewhat resembling the story of this play is to be found in the fifth book of the Orlando Furioso. In Spenser's Fairy Queen, b. ii. c. iv. as remote an original may be traced. A novel, however, of Bellefforest, copied from another of Bandello, seems to have furnished Shakspeare with his fable, as it approaches nearer in all its particulars to the play before us, than any other performance known to be extant. I have seen so many versions from this once popular collection, that I entertain no doubt but that a great majority of the tales it comprehends have made their appearance in an English dress. Of that particular story which I have just mentioned, viz. the 18th history in the third volume, no translation has hitherto been met with.

This play was entered at Stationers' Hall, Aug. 23, 1600.

STEEVENS.

Ariosto is continually quoted for the fable of Much Ado about Nothing, but I suspect our poet to have been satisfied with the Geneura of Turberville. "The tale (says Harington) is a pretie comical matter, and hath bin written in English verse some few years past, learnedly and with good grace, though in verse of another kind, by M. George Turbervil." *Ariosto*, fol. 1591, p. 39.

FARMER.

I suppose this comedy to have been written in 1600, in which year it was printed. See An Attempt to ascertain the Order of Shakspeare's Plays. MALONE.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

Don PEDRO, Prince of Arragon.
Don JOHN, his bastard Brother.

CLAUDIO, a young Lord of Florence, favourite to Don Pedro.

BENEDICK, a young Lord of Padua, favourite likewise of Don Pedro.

LEONATO, Governor of Messina.
ANTONIO, his Brother.
BALTHAZAR, Servant to Don Pedro.

BORACHIO, CONRADE, } Followers of Don John.

DOGBERRY, VERGES, } Two foolish Officers.

A Sexton.
A Friar.
A Boy.

HERO, Daughter to Leonato.
BEATRICE, Niece to Leonato.

MARGARET, URSULA. } Gentlewomen attending on Hero.

Messengers, Watch, and Attendants.

SCENE, Messina.

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Before LEONATO's House.

Enter LEONATO, HERO[1], BEATRICE, *and others, with a Messenger.*

LEON. I learn in this letter, that Don Pedro * of Arragon comes this night to Messina.

MESS. He is very near by this; he was not three leagues off when I left him.

LEON. How many gentlemen have you lost in this action?

MESS. But few of any sort[2], and none of name.

LEON. A victory is twice itself, when the achiever

* Old copies, *Don Peter.*

[1] Innogen, (the mother of Hero,) in the old quarto that I have seen of this play, printed in 1600, is mentioned to enter in two several scenes. The succeeding editions have all continued her name in the Dramatis Personæ. But I have ventured to expunge it; there being no mention of her through the play, no one speech addressed to her, nor one syllable spoken by her. Neither is there any one passage, from which we have any reason to determine that Hero's mother was living. It seems as if the poet had in his first plan designed such a character: which, on a survey of it, he found would be superfluous; and therefore he left it out. THEOBALD.

The name of Hero's mother occurs also in the first folio: "Enter Leonato governor of Messina, *Innogen his wife*," &c. STEEVENS.

[2] —of any SORT,] *Sort* is *rank*, *distinction*. So, in Chapman's version of the 16th book of Homer's Odyssey:

"A ship, and in her many a man of *sort*."

I incline, however, to Mr. M. Mason's easier explanation. Of any *sort*, says he, means of any kind whatsoever. 'There were but few killed of any kind, and none of rank.' STEEVENS.

brings home full numbers. I find here, that Don Pedro * hath bestowed much honour on a young Florentine, called Claudio.

Mess. Much deserved on his part, and equally remembered by Don Pedro: He hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age; doing, in the figure of a lamb, the feats of a lion: he hath, indeed, better bettered expectation, than you must expect of me to tell you how.

Leon. He hath an uncle here in Messina will be very much glad of it.

Mess. I have already delivered him letters, and there appears much joy in him; even so much, that joy could not show itself modest enough, without a badge of bitterness [3].

Leon. Did he break out into tears?

Mess. In great measure [4].

* Old copies, *Peter*.

[3] —joy could not show itself MODEST enough, without a BADGE of bitterness.] This is judiciously expressed. Of all the transports of joy, that which is attended with tears is least offensive; because, carrying with it this mark of pain, it allays the envy that usually attends another's happiness. This he finely calls a *modest* joy, such a one as did not insult the observer by an indication of happiness unmixed with pain. WARBURTON.

A somewhat similar expression occurs in Chapman's version of the 10th book of the Odyssey:

" —— our eyes wore
" The same wet *badge* of weak humanity."

This is an idea which Shakspeare seems to have been delighted to introduce. It occurs again in Macbeth:

" —— my plenteous joys,
" Wanton in fullness, seek to hide themselves
" In drops of sorrow." STEEVENS.

A *badge* being the distinguishing *mark* worn in our author's time by the servants of noblemen, &c. on the sleeve of their liveries, with his usual licence he employs the word to signify a *mark* or *token* in general. So, in Macbeth:

" Their hands and faces were all *badg'd* with blood."

MALONE.

[4] In great measure.] i. e. in abundance. STEEVENS.

Leon. A kind overflow of kindness: There are no faces truer [5] than those that are so washed. How much better is it to weep at joy, than to joy at weeping?

Beat. I pray you, is signior Montanto returned [6] from the wars, or no?

Mess. I know none of that name, lady; there was none such in the army of any sort [7].

Leon. What is he that you ask for, niece?

Hero. My cousin means signior Benedick of Padua.

Mess. O, he is returned; and as pleasant as ever he was.

Beat. He set up his bills here in Messina [8], and

[5] — no faces TRUER —] That is, none *honester*, none *more sincere*. JOHNSON.

[6] — is signior MONTANTO returned —] *Montante*, in Spanish, is a *huge two-handed sword*, [a title] given, with much humour, to one [whom] the speaker would represent as a boaster or bravado. WARBURTON.

Montanto was one of the ancient terms of the fencing-school. So, in Every Man in his Humour: " — your punto, your reverso, your stoccata, your imbrocata, your passada, your *montanto*," &c. Again, in The Merry Wives of Windsor:

" —— thy reverse, thy distance, thy *montánt*." STEEVENS.

[7] — there was none such in the army of any SORT.] Not meaning there was none such of *any order or degree whatever*, but that there was none such of *any quality above the common*. WARBURTON.

[8] He set up his bills, &c.] So, in Ben Jonson's Every Man out of his Humour, Shift says:

" This is rare, I have *set up* my *bills* without discovery."

Again, in Swetnam Arraign'd, 1620:

" I have bought foils already, *set up bills*,
" Hung up my two-hand sword," &c.

Again, in Nash's Have With You to Saffron Walden, &c. 1596:

" —— *setting up bills*, like a bearward or fencer, what fights we shall have, and what weapons she will meet me at."

The following account of one of these challenges, taken from an ancient MS. of which further mention is made in a note on The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act I. Sc. I. may not be unacceptable to the inquisitive reader: " Item a challenge playde

challenged Cupid at the flight [9]: and my uncle's fool, reading the challenge, subscribed for Cupid,

before the King's majestie (Edward VI.) at Westminster, by three maisters, Willyam Pascall, Robert Greene, and W. Browne, at seven kynde of weapons. That is to say, the axe, the pike, the rapier and target, the rapier and cloke, and with two swords, agaynst all alyens and strangers being borne without the King's dominions, of what countrie so ever he or they were, geving them warninge by theyr *bills set up* by the three maisters, the space of eight weeks before the sayd challenge was playde; and it was holden four severall Sundayes one after another." It appears from the same work, that all challenges "to any maister within the realme of Englande being an Englishe man," were against the statutes of the "Noble Science of Defence."

Beatrice means, that Benedick published a general challenge, like a prize-fighter. STEEVENS.

9 — challenged Cupid at the FLIGHT:] *Flight* (as Mr. Douce observes to me) does not here mean an *arrow*, but a sort of shooting called *roving*, or shooting at long lengths. The arrows used at this sport are called *flight*-arrows; as were those used in battle for great distances. So, in Beaumont and Fletcher's Bonduca:

"—— not the quick rack swifter;
"The virgin from the hated ravisher
"Not half so fearful: not a *flight* drawn home,
"A round stone from a sling —."

Again, in A Woman Kill'd with Kindness, 1617:

"We have tied our geldings to a tree, two *flight-shot* off."

Again, in Middleton's Game of Chess:

"Who, as they say, discharg'd it like a *flight*."

Again, in The Entertainment at Causome House, &c. 1613:

"—— it being from the park about two *flight-shots* in length."

Again, in The Civil Wars of Daniel, b. viii. st. 15:

"—— and assign'd
"The archers their *flight*-shafts to shoot away;
"Which th' adverse side (with sleet and dimness blind,
"Mistaken in the distance of the way,)
"Answer with their *sheaf-arrows*, that came short
"Of their intended aim, and did no hurt."

Holinshed makes the same distinction in his account of the same occurrence, and adds, that these *flights* were provided on purpose. Again, in Holinshed, p. 649: "He caused the soldiers to shoot their *flights* towards the lord Audlies company."

Mr. Tollet observes, that the length of a *flight-shot* seems ascertained by a passage in Leland's Itinerary, 1769, vol. iv p. 44: "The passage into it at ful se is a *flite-shot* over, as much as the Tamise is above the bridge." It were easy to know the length of

and challenged him at the bird-bolt *[1].—I pray you, how many hath he killed and eaten in these wars?

* Old copies, *burbolt*.

London-bridge, and Stowe's Survey may inform the curious reader whether the river has been narrowed by embanking since the days of Leland.

Mr. Douce, however, observes, that as the length of the shot depended on the strength and skill of the archer, nothing can with certainty be determined by the passage quoted from Leland. STEEVENS.

The *flight* was an arrow of a particular kind. In the Harleian Catalogue of MS. vol. i. n. 69, is "a challenge of the lady Maiee's servants to all comers, to be performed at Greenwiche—to shoot standart arrow, or *flight*." I find the title-page of an old pamphlet still more explicit—"A new *post*—a marke exceeding necessary for all men's arrows: whether the great man's *flight*, the gallant's *rover*, the wise man's *pricke-shaft*, the poor man's *but-shaft*, or the fool's *bird-bolt*." FARMER.

These terms are thus explained by Mr. Gifford: "*Flights* were long and light-feathered-arrows that went directly to the mark; *rovers* were arrows shot compass-wise, or with a certain degree of elevation; these were the all-dreaded war weapons of the English; *but-shafts*, as the name sufficiently intimates, were the strong unbarbed arrows used in the field exercises and amusements of the day." BOSWELL.

[1] — at the BIRD-BOLT.] The *bird-bolt* is a short thick arrow without a point, and spreading at the extremity so much, as to leave a flat surface, about the breadth of a shilling. Such are to this day in use to kill rooks with, and are shot from a cross-bow. So, in Marston's What You Will, 1607:

"—— ignorance should shoot
"His gross-knobb'd *bird-bolt*—."

Again, in Love in a Maze, 1632:

"—— Cupid,
"Pox of his *bird-bolt!* Venus,
"Speak to thy boy to fetch his *arrow* back,
"Or strike her with a *sharp one!*" STEEVENS.

The meaning of the whole is—Benedick, from a vain conceit of his influence over women, challenged Cupid at *roving* (a particular kind of archery, in which *flight*-arrows are used). In other words, he challenged him to *shoot at hearts*. The fool, to ridicule this piece of vanity, in his turn challenged Benedick to shoot at crows with the cross-bow and bird-bolt; an inferior kind of archery used by fools, who, for obvious reasons, were not per-

But how many hath he killed? for, indeed, I promised to eat all of his killing[2].

Leon. Faith, niece, you tax signior Benedick too much; but he'll be meet with you[3], I doubt it not.

Mess. He hath done good service, lady, in these wars.

Beat. You had musty victual, and he hath holp to eat it: he is a very valiant trencher-man, he hath an excellent stomach.

Mess. And a good soldier too, lady.

Beat. And a good soldier to a lady;—But what is he to a lord?

Mess. A lord to a lord, a man to a man; stuffed with all honourable virtues[4].

Beat. It is so, indeed; he is no less than a

mitted to shoot with pointed arrows: Whence the proverb—"A fool's bolt is soon shot." Douce.

[2] I promised to eat all of his killing.] So, in King Henry V.:

"*Ram.* He longs to eat the English.

"*Con.* I think, he will eat all he kills." Steevens.

[3] — he'll be MEET with you,] This is a very common expression in the midland counties, and signifies, *he'll be your match, he'll be even with you.*

So, in TEXNOΓAMIA, by B. Holiday, 1618:

"Go meet her, or else she'll *be meet* with me."

Chapman has nearly the same phrase in his version of the 22d Iliad:

"—— when —

"Paris and Phœbus *meet with thee* —." Steevens.

[4] — STUFFED with all honourable virtues.] *Stuffed*, in this first instance, has no ridiculous meaning. Mr. Edwards observes, that Mede, in his Discourses on Scripture, speaking of Adam, says, "— he whom God had *stuffed* with so many excellent qualities." *Edwards's MS.*

Again, in The Winter's Tale:

"—— whom you know

"Of *stuff'd* sufficiency."

Un homme bien *etoffé*, signifies, in French, *a man in good circumstances.*" Steevens.

stuffed man: but for the stuffing,—Well, we are all mortal [5].

Leon. You must not, sir, mistake my niece: there is a kind of merry war betwixt signior Benedick and her: they never meet, but there is a skirmish of wit between them.

Beat. Alas, he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict, four of his five wits [6] went halting off, and now is the whole man governed with one: so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm,

[5] — he is no less than a STUFFED man: but for the STUFFING,—Well, we are all mortal.] Mr. Theobald plumed himself much on the pointing of this passage; which, by the way, he might learn from D'Avenant [in his Law against Lovers]: but he says not a word, nor any one else that I know of, about the reason of this abruption. The truth is, Beatrice starts an idea at the words *stuffed man;* and prudently checks herself in the pursuit of it. A *stuffed man* was one of the many cant phrases for a *cuckold*. In Lyly's Midas, we have an inventory of Motto's *moveables:* "Item, says Petulus, one paire of hornes in the bride-chamber on the *bed's head*.—The *beast's* head, observes Licio; for *Motto is stuff'd in the head*, and these are among *unmoveable goods*."

FARMER.

[6] — four of his five WITS —] In our author's time *wit* was the general term for intellectual powers. So, Davies on the Soul:

"*Wit*, seeking truth, from cause to cause ascends,
"And never rests till it the first attain;
"*Will*, seeking good, finds many middle ends,
"But never stays till it the last do gain."

And, in another part:

"But if a phrenzy do possess the brain,
"It so disturbs and blots the forms of things,
"As fantasy proves altogether vain,
"And to the *wit* no true relation brings.
"Then doth the *wit*, admitting all for true,
"Build fond conclusions on those idle grounds —."

The *wits* seem to have been reckoned five, by analogy to the five senses, or the five inlets of ideas. JOHNSON.

So, in a prayer by Sir Thomas More, which I do not find in his works, but which is preserved in A Manual of Praiers, printed at Calice, 1599: "I pray thee, gratious Lorde, that thou forgive me all the sinnes that I have done, thought, or said, &c. in mispending of my five *wittes*." See the notes on King Lear, Act III. Sc. IV.: "Bless thy *five wits*." BOSWELL.

let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse [7]; for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature.—Who is his companion now? He hath every month a new sworn brother [8].

Mess. Is it possible?

Beat. Very easily possible: he wears his faith [9] but as the fashion of his hat, it ever changes with the next block [1].

Mess. I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books [2].

7 — if he have WIT ENOUGH TO KEEP HIMSELF WARM, let him bear it for a DIFFERENCE, &c.] *Such a one has wit enough to keep himself warm*, is a proverbial expression.

So, in Heywood's Epigrams on Proverbs:

"*Wit* kept by *warmth*."

"Thou art wise inough, if thou *keepe thee warme*,
"But the least colde that cumth, kilth thy wit by harme."

Again, in The Wise Woman of Hogsden, 1638: "You are the wise woman, are you? and *have wit to keep yourself warm* enough, I warrant you." Again, in Cynthia's Revels, by Ben Jonson: "—your whole self cannot but be perfectly wise; for your hands have *wit enough to keep themselves warm*."

To bear any thing for a *difference*, is a term in heraldry. So, in Hamlet, Ophelia says:

"—— you may wear your rue with a *difference*."

STEEVENS.

8 — sworn brother.] i. e. one with whom he hath *sworn* (as was anciently the custom among adventurers) to share fortunes. See Mr. Whalley's note on—"we'll be all three *sworn-brothers* to France," in King Henry V. Act II. Sc. I. STEEVENS.

9 — he wears his FAITH —] Not religious profession, but *profession of friendship*; for the speaker gives it as the reason of her asking, *who was now his companion?* that *he had every month a new sworn brother*. WARBURTON.

1 — with the next BLOCK.] A *block* is the mould on which a hat is formed. So, in Decker's Satiromastix:

"Of what fashion is this knight's wit? of what *block?*"

See a note on King Lear, Act IV. Sc. VI.

The old writers sometimes use the word *block*, for the hat itself. STEEVENS.

2 — the gentleman is not IN YOUR BOOKS.] This is a phrase used, I believe, by more than understand it. *To be in one's*

Beat. No: an he were, I would burn my study. But, I pray you, who is his companion? Is there

books is to be in one's *codicils* or *will, to be among friends set down for legacies.* Johnson.

I rather think that the *books* alluded to, are memorandum-books, like the visiting books of the present age. So, in Decker's Honest Whore, Part II. 1630:

"I am sure her name was in my *table-book* once."

Or, perhaps the allusion is to matriculation at the University. So, in Aristippus, or The Jovial Philosopher, 1630:

"You must be matriculated, and have your name recorded in Albo Academiæ."

Again: "What have you enrolled him in *albo?* Have you fully admitted him into the society?—to be a member of the body academic?"

Again: "And if I be not entred, and have my name admitted into some of their *books*, let," &c.

And yet I think the following passage in The Maid's Revenge, by Shirley, 1639, will sufficiently support my first supposition:

"Pox of your compliment, you were best not write in her *table-books.*"

It appears to have been anciently the custom to *chronicle the small beer* of every occurrence, whether literary or domestic, in *table-books.*

So, in the play last quoted:

"Devolve itself!—that word is not in my *table-books.*"

Hamlet likewise has,—"my *tables,*" &c.

Again, in The Whore of Babylon, 1607:

"—— Campeius!—Babylon
"His name hath *in her tables.*"

Again, in Acolastus, a comedy, 1540:

"We weyl haunse thee, or set thy name into our *felowship boke*, with clappynge of handes," &c.

I know not exactly to what custom this last quoted passage refers, unless to the *album;* for just after, the same expression occurs again: that "— from henceforthe thou may'st have a place worthy for thee in our *whyte:* from hence thou may'st have thy name written in our *boke.*"

It should seem from the following passage in The Taming of a Shrew, that this phrase might have originated from the Herald's Office:

"A herald, Kate! oh, put me *in thy books!*"

After all, the following note in one of the Harleian MSS. No. 847, may be the best illustration:

no young squarer [3] now, that will make a voyage with him to the devil?

Mess. He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

Beat. O Lord! he will hang upon him like a disease: he is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! if he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere he be cured.

Mess. I will hold friends with you, lady.

Beat. Do, good friend.

Leon. You will never run mad, niece.

Beat. No, not till a hot January.

Mess. Don Pedro is approached.

"W. C. to Henry Fradsham, Gent. the owner of this book:
"Some write their fantasies in verse
"*In theire bookes* where they friendshippe shewe,
"Wherein oft tymes they doe rehearse
"The great good will that they do owe," &c. STEEVENS.

This phrase has not been exactly interpreted. *To be in a man's books*, originally meant to be in the list of his *retainers*. Sir John Mandeville tells us, "alle the mynstrelles that comen before the great Chan ben witholden with him, as of his hous-hold, and entred in his *bookes*, as for his own men." FARMER.

A *servant* and a *lover* were in Cupid's Vocabulary, synonymous. Hence perhaps the phrase—*to be in a person's books*—was applied equally to the *lover* and the *menial attendant*.

That in all great families the names of the servants of the household were written in *books* kept for that purpose, appears from the following passage in A New Trick to Cheat the Devil, a comedy, 1639: "See, Master Treatwell, that his name be *enrolled* among my other *servants*. Let my steward receive such notice from you." "Let me be *unroll'd*, (says our poet's Autolycus) and my name be put in the *book* of virtue." MALONE.

There is a MS. of Lord Burleigh's, in the Marquis of Lansdowne's library, wherein, among many other household concerns, he has entered the names of all his servants, &c. DOUCE.

[3] — young SQUARER —] A *squarer* I take to be a cholerick, quarrelsome fellow, for in this sense Shakspeare uses the word to *square*. So, in A Midsummer-Night's Dream, it is said of Oberon and Titania, that they never meet but they *square*. So the sense may be, 'Is there no *hot-blooded* youth that will keep him company through all his mad pranks?' JOHNSON.

Enter Don PEDRO, *attended by* BALTHAZAR *and others, Don* JOHN, CLAUDIO, *and* BENEDICK[4].

D. PEDRO. Good signior Leonato, you are come* to meet your trouble: the fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you encounter it.

LEON. Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your grace: for trouble being gone, comfort should remain; but, when you depart from me, sorrow abides, and happiness takes his leave.

D. PEDRO. You embrace your charge[5] too willingly.—I think, this is your daughter.

LEON. Her mother hath many times told me so.

BENE. Were you in doubt, sir, that you asked her?

LEON. Signior Benedick, no; for then were you a child.

D. PEDRO. You have it full, Benedick: we may guess by this what you are, being a man. Truly, the lady fathers herself[6]:—Be happy, lady! for you are like an honourable father.

BENE. If signior Leonato be her father, she would not have his head on her shoulders, for all Messina, as like him as she is.

BEAT. I wonder, that you will still be talking, signior Benedick; no body marks you.

* Quarto, *are you come.*

[4] In the old copies: "*Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedicke, Balthasar, and John the bastard.*" BOSWELL.

[5] —your CHARGE—] That is, your *burden*, your *incumbrance*. JOHNSON.

Charge does not mean, as Dr. Johnson explains it, *burden, incumbrance*, but *the person committed to your care*. So it is used in the relationship between guardian and ward. DOUCE.

[6] —fathers herself:] This phrase is common in Dorsetshire: "Jack *fathers* himself;" is like his father. STEEVENS.

Bene. What, my dear lady Disdain! are you yet living?

Beat. Is it possible, disdain should die, while she hath such meet food to feed it, as signior Benedick[7]? Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence.

Bene. Then is courtesy a turn-coat:—But it is certain, I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart; for, truly, I love none.

Beat. A dear happiness to women; they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God, and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that; I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow, than a man swear he loves me.

Bene. God keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall 'scape a predestinate scratched face.

Beat. Scratching could not make it worse, an 'twere such a face as yours were.

Bene. Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher.

Beat. A bird of my tongue, is better than a beast of yours.

Bene. I would, my horse had the speed of your tongue: and so good a continuer: But keep your way o' God's name; I have done.

Beat. You always end with a jade's trick; I know you of old.

D. Pedro. This is the sum of all: Leonato,—signior Claudio, and signior Benedick,—my dear friend Leonato, hath invited you all. I tell him

7 Is it possible, DISDAIN should die, while she hath such meet food to feed it, as signior Benedick?] A kindred thought occurs in Coriolanus, Act II. Sc. I.:

"Our very priests must become *mockers*, if they encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are." STEEVENS.

we shall stay here at the least a month; and he heartily prays, some occasion may detain us longer: I dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart.

Leon. If you swear, my lord, you shall not be forsworn.—Let me bid you welcome, my lord: being reconciled to the prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

D. John. I thank you [8]: I am not of many words, but I thank you.

Leon. Please it your grace lead on?

D. Pedro. Your hand, Leonato; we will go together. [*Exeunt all but Benedick and Claudio.*

Claud. Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of signior Leonato?

Bene. I noted her not; but I looked on her.

Claud. Is she not a modest young lady?

Bene. Do you question me, as an honest man should do, for my simple true judgment; or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

Claud. No, I pray thee, speak in sober judgment.

Bene. Why, i'faith, methinks she is too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise: only this commendation I can afford her; that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome; and being no other but as she is, I do not like her.

Claud. Thou thinkest, I am in sport; I pray thee, tell me truly how thou lik'st her.

Bene. Would you buy her, that you inquire after her?

Claud. Can the world buy such a jewel?

[8] I thank you:] The poet has judiciously marked the gloominess of Don John's character, by making him averse to the common forms of civility. Sir J. Hawkins.

Bene. Yea, and a case to put it into. But speak you this with a sad brow? or do you play the flouting Jack [9]; to tell us Cupid is a good hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare carpenter [1]? Come, in what key shall a man take you, to go in the song [2]?

9 —the flouting Jack;] *Jack*, in our author's time, I know not why, was a term of contempt. So, in King Henry IV. P. I. Act III.:

" —— the prince is a *Jack*, a sneak-cup."

Again, in The Taming of the Shrew:

" —— rascal fidler,

" And twangling *Jack*, with twenty such vile terms," &c.

See in Minsheu's Dict. 1617: " A *Jack* sauce, or saucie *Jack*." See also Chaucer's Cant. Tales, ver. 14,816, and the note, edit. Tyrwhitt. Malone.

1 — to tell us Cupid is a good hare-finder, &c.] I know not whether I conceive the jest here intended. Claudio hints his love of Hero. Benedick asks, whether he is serious, or whether he only means to jest, and to tell them that *Cupid is a good hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare carpenter*. A man praising a pretty lady in jest, may show the quick sight of Cupid; but what has it to do with the *carpentry* of Vulcan? Perhaps the thought lies no deeper than this: 'Do you mean to tell us as new what we all know already?' Johnson.

I believe no more is meant by those ludicrous expressions than this—'Do you mean,' says Benedick, 'to amuse us with improbable stories?'

An ingenious correspondent, whose signature is R. W. explains the passage in the same sense, but more amply. " Do you mean to tell us that love is not blind, and that fire will not consume what is combustible?" for both these propositions are implied in making Cupid *a good hare-finder*, and Vulcan (the God of fire) *a good carpenter*. In other words, 'Would you convince me, whose opinion on this head is well known, that you can be in love without being blind, and can play with the flame of beauty without being scorched?' Steevens.

I explain the passage thus: 'Do you scoff and mock in telling us that Cupid, who is blind, is a good hare-finder, which requires a quick eye-sight; and that Vulcan, a blacksmith, is a rare carpenter?' Tollet.

After such attempts at decent illustration, I am afraid that he who wishes to know why Cupid is a good *hare-finder*, must discover it by the assistance of many quibbling allusions of the same sort, about *hair* and *hoar*, in Mercutio's song in the second Act of Romeo and Juliet. Collins.

Claud. In mine eye, she is the sweetest lady that ever I looked on.

Bene. I can see yet without spectacles, and I see no such matter: there's her cousin, an she were not possessed with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty, as the first of May doth the last of December. But I hope, you have no intent to turn husband; have you?

Claud. I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.

Bene. Is it come to this, i'faith? Hath not the world one man, but he will wear his cap with suspicion [3]? Shall I never see a bachelor of threescore again? Go to, i'faith; an thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it, and sigh away Sundays [4]. Look, Don Pedro is returned to seek you.

Re-enter Don Pedro.

D. Pedro. What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonato's?

[2] — to go in the song?] i. e. to join with you in your song—to strike in with you in the song. Steevens.

[3] — wear his cap with suspicion?] That is, subject his head to the disquiet of jealousy. Johnson.

In Painter's Palace of Pleasure, p. 233, we have the following passage: "All they that *weare hornes* be pardoned to weare their *cappes* upon their heads." Henderson.

Perhaps the meaning is,—'Is there not one man in the world prudent enough to keep out of that state where he must live in apprehension that his *night-cap* will be worn occasionally by another!' So, in Othello:

"For I *fear* Cassio with my *night-cap* too." Malone.

[4] — sigh away Sundays.] A proverbial expression to signify that a man has no rest at all; when Sunday, a day formerly of ease and diversion, was passed so uncomfortably. Warburton.

I cannot find this *proverbial* expression in any ancient book whatever. I am apt to believe that the learned commentator has mistaken the drift of it, and that it most probably alludes to the strict manner in which the Sabbath was observed by the Puritans, who usually spent that day in *sighs* and *gruntings*, and other hypocritical marks of devotion. Steevens.

Bene. I would, your grace would constrain me to tell.

D. Pedro. I charge thee on thy allegiance.

Bene. You hear, Count Claudio: I can be secret as a dumb man, I would have you think so; but on my allegiance,—mark you this, on my allegiance:—He is in love. With who?—now that is your grace's part.—Mark, how short his answer is:—With Hero, Leonato's short daughter.

Claud. If this were so, so were it uttered [5].

Bene. Like the old tale, my lord [6]: it is not so, nor 'twas not so; but, indeed, God forbid it should be so.

Claud. If my passion change not shortly, God forbid it should be otherwise.

D. Pedro. Amen, if you love her; for the lady is very well worthy.

Claud. You speak this to fetch me in, my lord.

D. Pedro. By my troth, I speak my thought.

Claud. And, in faith, my lord, I spoke mine.

[5] *Claud.* If this were so, so were it uttered.] This and the three next speeches I do not well understand; there seems something omitted relating to Hero's consent, or to Claudio's marriage, else I know not what Claudio can wish *not to be otherwise*. The copies all read alike. Perhaps it may be better thus:

'*Claud.* If this were so, so were it.

'*Bene.* Uttered like the old tale, &c.'

Claudio gives a sullen answer, *if it is so, so it is*. Still there seems something omitted which Claudio and Pedro concur in wishing. Johnson.

Claudio, evading at first a confession of his passion, says, if I had really confided such a secret to him, yet he would have blabbed it in this manner. In his next speech, he thinks proper to avow his love; and when Benedick says, *God forbid it should be so*, i. e. God forbid he should even wish to marry her,—Claudio replies, God forbid I should not wish it. Steevens.

[6] Like the old tale, my lord:] See the end of this play for the old tale alluded to, which has been most fortunately recovered by Mr. Blakeway, and is, perhaps, one of the most happy illustrations of Shakspeare that have ever appeared. Boswell.

Bene. And, by my two faiths and troths, my lord, I spoke mine [7].

Claud. That I love her, I feel.

D. Pedro. That she is worthy, I know.

Bene. That I neither feel how she should be loved, nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me; I will die in it at the stake.

D. Pedro. Thou wast ever an obstinate heretick in the despite of beauty.

Claud. And never could maintain his part, but in the force of his will [8].

Bene. That a woman conceived me, I thank her; that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble thanks: but that I will have a recheat winded in my forehead [9], or hang my bugle in an

[7] — I SPOKE mine.] Thus the quarto 1600. The folio reads—"I *speak* mine." But the former is right. Benedick means, that he *spoke* his mind when he said—"God forbid it should be so;" i. e. that Claudio should be in love, and marry in consequence of his passion. STEEVENS.

[8] — but in the force of his will.] Alluding to the definition of a heretick in the schools. WARBURTON.

[9] — but that I will have a RECHEAT winded in my forehead.] That is, *I will wear a horn on my forehead which the huntsman may blow.* A *recheate* is the sound by which dogs are called back. Shakspeare had no mercy upon the poor cuckold; his *horn* is an inexhaustible subject of merriment. JOHNSON.

So, in The Return from Parnassus: "When you blow the death of your fox in the field or covert, then you must sound three notes, with three winds; and *recheat*, mark you, sir, upon the same three winds."

"Now, sir, when you come to your stately gate, as you sounded the *recheat* before, so now you must sound the relief three times."

Again, in The Book of Huntynge, &c. b. l. no date: "Blow the whole *rechate* with three wyndes, the first wynde one longe and six shorte. The second wynde two shorte and one longe. The thred wynde one longe and two shorte."

Among Bagford's Collections relative to Typography, in the British Museum, 1044, II. C. is an engraved half sheet, containing the ancient Hunting Notes of England, &c. Among these, I

invisible baldrick [7], all women shall pardon me: Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none; and the fine [8] is, (for the which I may go the finer,) I will live a bachelor.

D. Pedro. I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

Bene. With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord; not with love: prove, that ever I lose more blood with love, than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen, and hang me up at the door of a brothel-house, for the sign of blind Cupid.

find, Single, Double, and Treble *Recheats*, Running *Recheat*, Warbling *Recheat*, another *Recheat* with the tongue very hard, another smoother *Recheat*, and another warbling *Recheat*. The musical notes are affixed to them all. Steevens.

A *recheate* is a particular lesson upon the horn, to call dogs back from the scent: from the old French word *recet*, which was used in the same sense as *retraite*. Hanmer.

7 — hang my bugle in an invisible baldrick,] *Bugle*, i. e. bugle-horn, hunting-horn. The meaning seems to be—'or that I should be compelled to carry a horn on my forehead where there is nothing visible to support it.' So, in John Alday's translation of Pierre Boisteau's Theatrum Mundi, &c. bl. l. no date: "Beholde the hazard wherin thou art (sayth William de la Perriere) that thy round head become not forked, which were a fearfull sight *if it were visible and apparent*."

It is still said of the mercenary cuckold, that he *carries his horns in his pockets*. Steevens.

"Baldrick." "A *belt*, from the old French word *baudrier*, *a piece of dressed leather girdle* or *belt*, made of such leather; and that comes from the word *baudroyer*, to *dress leather*, *curry* or *make belts*. Monsieur Menage says, this comes from the Italian *baldringus*, and that from the Latin *balteus*, from whence the *Baltick* sea has its name, because it goes round as a *belt*. This word *baudrier*, among the French, sometimes signified a *girdle*, in which people used to put their money. See Rabelais, iii. 37. Menag. Orig. Franc. Somn. Dict. Sax. Nicot. Dict." *Fortescue Aland's Note on Fortescue, on the Difference between an absolute and limited Monarchy*, 8vo. 1724, p. 52. Reed.

8 — the fine —] The *conclusion*. Boswell.

D. Pedro. Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument [9].

Bene. If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat [1], and shoot at me; and he that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder, and called Adam [2].

9 — notable argument.] An eminent subject for satire. Johnson.

1 — in a bottle like a cat,] As to *the cat and bottle*, I can procure no better information than the following:

In some counties in England, a cat was formerly closed up with a quantity of soot in a wooden bottle, (such as that in which shepherds carry their liquor,) and was suspended on a line. He who beat out the bottom as he ran under it, and was nimble enough to escape its contents, was regarded as the hero of this inhuman diversion.

Again, in Warres, or the Peace is Broken, bl. l.: "— arrowes flew faster than they did at a *catte in a basket*, when Prince Arthur, or the Duke of Shordich, strucke up the drumme in the field."

In a Poem, however, called Cornu-copiæ, or Pasquil's Night-cap, or an Antidote to the Head-ache, 1623, p. 48, the following passage occurs:

"Fairer than any stake in Greys-inn field, &c.
"Guarded with gunners, bill-men, and a rout
"Of bow-men bold, which *at a cat do shoot*."

Again, ibid.:

"Nor at the top a *cat-a-mount* was fram'd,
"Or some wilde beast that ne'er before was tam'd;
"Made at the charges of some archer stout,
"To have his name canoniz'd in the clout."

The foregoing quotations may serve to throw some light on Benedick's allusion. They prove, however, that it was the custom to shoot at factitious as well as real cats. Steevens.

This practice is still kept up at Kelso, in Scotland, where it is called—*Cat-in-barrel*. See a description of the whole ceremony in a little account of the town of Kelso, published in 1789, by one Ebenezer Lazarus, a silly Methodist, who has interlarded his book with scraps of pious and other poetry. Speaking of this sport, he says:

"The *cat in the barrel* exhibits such a farce,
"That he who can relish it is worse than an ass." Douce.

2 — and he that hits me, let him be clapped on the shoulder, and called Adam.] But why should he therefore be called *Adam*? Perhaps, by a quotation or two we may be able to trace the poet's allusion here. In Law-Tricks, or, Who Would Have Thought It,

D. Pedro. Well, as time shall try:
In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke[3].

Bene. The savage bull may; but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns, and set them in my forehead: and let me be vilely painted; and in such great letters as they write, *Here is good horse to hire*, let them signify under my sign,—*Here you may see Benedick the married man.*

Claud. If this should ever happen, thou would'st be horn-mad.

D. Pedro. Nay, if Cupid have not spent all his quiver in Venice[4], thou wilt quake for this shortly.

(a comedy written by John Day, and printed in 1608,) I find this speech: "Adam Bell, a substantial out-law, and a passing good *archer*, yet no tobacconist." By this it appears, that Adam Bell at that time of day was of reputation for his skill at the bow. I find him again mentioned in a burlesque poem of Sir William D'Avenant's, called The Long Vacation in London. Theobald.

Adam Bel, Clym of the Cloughe, and Wyllyam of Cloudesle, were, says Dr. Percy, three noted outlaws, whose skill in archery rendered them formerly as famous in the North of England, as Robin Hood and his fellows were in the midland counties. Their place of residence was in the forest of Englewood, not far from Carlisle. At what time they lived does not appear. The author of the common ballads on The Pedigree, Education, and Marriage of Robin Hood, makes them contemporary with Robin Hood's father, in order to give him the honour of beating them. See Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, vol. i. p. 143, where the ballad on these celebrated outlaws is preserved. Steevens.

[3] *In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke.*] This line is from The Spanish Tragedy, or Hieronymo, &c. and occurs also, with a slight variation, in Watson's Sonnets, 4to. bl. l. printed in 1581. See note on the last edition of Dodsley's Old Plays, vol. xii. p. 387. Steevens.

The Spanish Tragedy was printed and acted before 1593. Malone.

It may be proved that The Spanish Tragedy had at least been written before 1592. Steevens.

[4] — if Cupid have not spent all his quiver in Venice,] All modern writers agree in representing Venice in the same light as the ancients did Cyprus. And it is this character of the people that is here alluded to. Warburton.

Bene. I look for an earthquake too then.

D. Pedro. Well, you will temporize with the hours. In the mean time, good signior Benedick, repair to Leonato's; commend me to him, and tell him, I will not fail him at supper; for, indeed, he hath made great preparation.

Bene. I have almost matter enough in me for such an embassage; and so I commit you—

Claud. To the tuition of God: From my house, (if I had it,)—

D. Pedro. The sixth of July: Your loving friend, Benedick.

Bene. Nay, mock not, mock not: The body of your discourse is sometime guarded with fragments [5], and the guards are but slightly basted on neither: ere you flout old ends any further [6], examine your conscience: and so I leave you.

[*Exit Benedick.*

5 — GUARDED with fragments,] *Guards* were ornamental lace or borders. So, in The Merchant of Venice:

"—— give him a livery
"More *guarded* than his fellows."

Again, in Henry IV. Part I.:

"—— velvet *guards*, and Sunday citizens." STEEVENS.

6 — ere you flout OLD ENDS, &c.] 'Before you endeavour to distinguish yourself any more by antiquated allusions, examine whether you can fairly claim them for your own.' This, I think, is the meaning; or it may be understood in another sense, 'examine, if your sarcasms do not touch yourself.' JOHNSON.

The ridicule here is to the formal conclusions of Epistles Dedicatory and Letters. Barnaby Googe thus ends his dedication to the first edition of Palingenius, 12mo. 1560: "And thus *committyng* your Ladiship with all yours to the *tuicion* of the moste mercifull *God*, I ende. From Staple Inne at London, the eighte and twenty of March." The practice had however become obsolete in Shakspeare's time. In A Poste with a Packet of Mad Letters, by Nicholas Breton, 4to, 1607, I find a letter ending in this manner, entitled, "A letter to laugh at after the *old fashion* of love to a Maide." REED.

Dr. Johnson's latter explanation is, I believe, the true one. By *old ends* the speaker may mean the conclusion of letters commonly used in Shakspeare's time: "From my house this sixth of

Claud. My liege, your highness now may do me good.

D. Pedro. My love is thine to teach; teach it but how,
And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn
Any hard lesson that may do thee good.

Claud. Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

D. Pedro. No child but Hero, she's his only heir:
Dost thou affect her, Claudio?

Claud. O my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye,
That lik'd, but had a rougher task in hand,
Than to drive liking to the name of love:
But now I am return'd, and that war-thought s
Have left their places vacant, in their rooms,
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying, I lik'd her ere I went to wars.

July," &c. So, in the conclusion of a letter which our author supposes Lucrece to write, in his Rape of Lucrece:

"So I *commend* me *from our house* in grief;
"My woes are tedious, though my words are brief."

See the note on that passage.

Old ends, however, may refer to the quotation that D. Pedro had made from The Spanish Tragedy: "Ere you attack me on the subject of love, with fragments of old plays, examine whether you are yourself free from its power." So, King Richard:

"With odd *old ends*, stol'n forth of holy writ."

This kind of conclusion to letters was not obsolete in our author's time, as has been suggested. Michael Drayton concludes one of his letters to Drummond of Hawthornden, in 1619, thus: "And so wishing you all happiness, *I commend you to God's tuition*, and rest your assured friend." So also Lord Salisbury concludes a letter to Sir Ralph Winwood, April 7th, 1610: "And so I commit you to God's protection." *Winwood's Memorials*, III. 147. Malone.

The practice might have become obsolete to the general though retained by certain individuals. An old fashion has sometimes a few solitary adherents, after it has been discarded from common use. Reed.

D. Pedro. Thou wilt be like a lover presently,
And tire the hearer with a book of words:
If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it;
And I will break with her, and with her father,
And thou shalt have her: Was't not to this end,
That thou began'st to twist so fine a story?

Claud. How sweetly do you minister to love,
That know love's grief by his complexion!
But lest my liking might too sudden seem,
I would have salv'd it with a longer treatise.

D. Pedro. What need the bridge much broader
than the flood?
The fairest grant is the necessity[7]:
Look, what will serve, is fit: 'tis once, thou lovest[8];
And I will fit thee with the remedy.
I know, we shall have revelling to-night;
I will assume thy part in some disguise,
And tell fair Hero I am Claudio;
And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart,
And take her hearing prisoner with the force

7 The fairest GRANT is the necessity:] i. e. no one can have a better reason for granting a request than the necessity of its being granted. WARBURTON.

Mr. Hayley with great acuteness proposes to read:

"The fairest grant is *to* necessity; i. e. necessitas quod cogit defendit." STEEVENS.

These words cannot imply the sense that Warburton contends for; but if we suppose that *grant* means *concession*, the sense is obvious; and that is no uncommon acceptation of that word.

M. MASON.

8 —'TIS ONCE, thou lov'st;] This phrase, with concomitant obscurity, appears in other dramas of our author, viz. The Merry Wives of Windsor, and King Henry VIII. In The Comedy of Errors, it stands as follows:

"*Once this*—Your long experience of her wisdom," &c.

Balthazar is speaking to the Ephesian Antipholis.

Once may therefore mean '*once* for all,'—'tis enough to say at *once*.' STEEVENS.

Once has here, I believe, the force of—*once for all*. So, in Coriolanus: "*Once*, if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him." MALONE.

And strong encounter of my amorous tale:
Then, after, to her father will I break;
And, the conclusion is, she shall be thine:
In practice let us put it presently. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in LEONATO's House.

Enter LEONATO *and* ANTONIO.

LEON. How now, brother? Where is my cousin, your son? Hath he provided this musick?

ANT. He is very busy about it. But, brother, I can tell you strange news [9] that you yet dreamt not of.

LEON. Are they good?

ANT. As the event stamps them; but they have a good cover, they show well outward. The prince and Count Claudio, walking in a thick-pleached alley [1] in my orchard, were thus much overheard by a man of mine: The prince discovered to Claudio, that he loved my niece your daughter, and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance; and, if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top, and instantly break with you of it.

LEON. Hath the fellow any wit, that told you this?

ANT. A good sharp fellow: I will send for him, and question him yourself.

LEON. No, no; we will hold it as a dream, till

9 — STRANGE news —] Thus the quarto 1600. The folio omits the epithet, which indeed is of little value. STEEVENS.

1 — a THICK-PLEACHED alley —] *Thick-pleached* is *thickly interwoven.* So afterwards, Act III. Sc. I.:

" —— bid her steal into the *pleached bower.*"

Again, in King Henry V.:

" —— her hedges even-*pleach'd* —." STEEVENS.

it appear itself:—but I will acquaint my daughter withal, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true. Go you, and tell her of it. [*Several persons cross the stage.*] Cousins, you know [2] what you have to do.—O, I cry you mercy, friend; you go with me, and I will use your skill:—Good cousin, have a care this busy time. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Another Room in LEONATO's House.

Enter Don JOHN and CONRADE.

CON. What the good year [3], my lord! why are you thus out of measure sad?

D. JOHN. There is no measure in the occasion that breeds it, therefore the sadness is without limit.

CON. You should hear reason.

D. JOHN. And when I have heard it, what blessing bringeth it?

CON. If not a present remedy, yet a patient sufferance.

D. JOHN. I wonder, that thou being (as thou say'st thou art) born under Saturn, goest about to

[2] Cousins, YOU KNOW —]— and afterwards,—*good cousin.*] *Cousins* were anciently enrolled among the dependants, if not the domesticks, of great families, such as that of Leonato.—Petruchio, while intent on the subjection of Katharine, calls out, in terms imperative, for his *cousin Ferdinand.* STEEVENS.

[3] What the GOUJERE,] i. e. *morbus Gallicus.* The old copy corruptly reads, *good-year.* The same expression occurs again in King Lear, Act V. Sc. III.:

"The *goujeres* shall devour them, flesh and fell."

See note on this passage. STEEVENS.

The old copy, I apprehend, is right. When Sir Thomas More was confined in the Tower, his wife visited him, and began reproving him: "What the good yeare, Mr. Moore, I marvell that you will now soe playe the foole." *Roper's Life of More.* BLAKEWAY.

apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide what I am [4]: I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests; eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure; sleep when I am drowsy, and tend to no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humour [5].

Con. Yea, but you must not make the full show of this, till you may do it without controlment. You have of late stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his grace; where it is impossible you should take true * root, but by the fair weather that you make yourself: it is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest.

D. John. I had rather be a canker in a hedge, than a rose in his grace [6]; and it better fits my blood to be disdained of all, than to fashion a car-

* First folio omits *true*.

[4] I cannot hide what I am:] This is one of our author's natural touches. An envious and unsocial mind, too proud to give pleasure, and too sullen to receive it, always endeavours to hide its malignity from the world and from itself, under the plainness of simple honesty, or the dignity of haughty independence. JOHNSON.

[5] — CLAW no man in his humour.] To *claw* is to *flatter*. So, *the pope's claw-backs*, in Bishop Jewel, are the pope's *flatterers*. The sense is the same in the proverb, *Mulus mulum scabit*. JOHNSON.

So, in Albion's England, 1597, p. 125:

"The overweening of thy wits does make thy foes to smile,
"Thy friends to weepe, and *claw-backs* thee with soothings to beguile."

Again, in Wylson on Usury, 1571, p. 141: "—therefore I will *clawe* him, and saye well might he fare, and godds blessing have he too. For the more he speaketh, the better it itcheth, and maketh better for me." REED.

[6] I had rather be a CANKER in a hedge, than a ROSE in his grace;] A *canker* is the *canker-rose*, *dog-rose*, *cynosbatus*, or *hip*. The sense is, I would rather live in obscurity the wild life of nature, than owe dignity or estimation to my brother. He still continues his wish of gloomy independence. But what is

riage to rob love from any: in this, though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man, it must not be denied that I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with a muzzle, and enfranchised with a clog; therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage: If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking: in the mean time, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

Con. Can you make no use of your discontent?

D. John. I make* all use of it, for I use it only [7]. Who comes here? What news, Borachio?

Enter Borachio.

Bora. I came yonder from a great supper; the

* So quarto, first folio, *I will make.*

the meaning of the expression, *a rose in his grace?* If he was a *rose* of himself, his brother's *grace* or *favour* could not degrade him. I once read thus: 'I had rather be a canker in a hedge, than a rose in his *garden;*' that is, I had rather be what nature makes me, however mean, than owe any exaltation or improvement to my brother's kindness or cultivation. But a less change will be sufficient: I think it should be read, 'I had rather be a canker in a hedge, than a rose *by* his grace.' Johnson.

The *canker* is a term often substituted for the *canker-rose.* Heywood, in his Love's Mistress, 1636, calls it the "*canker-flower.*"

Again, in Shakspeare's 54th Sonnet:

"The *canker* blooms have full as deep a die
"As the perfumed tincture of the *rose.*"

I think no change is necessary. The sense is,—'I had rather be a neglected dog-rose in a hedge, than a garden-flower of the same species, if it profited by his culture.' Steevens.

The latter words are intended as an answer to what Conrade has just said—"he hath ta'en you newly into his *grace,* where it is impossible you should take true *root,*" &c. In Macbeth we have a kindred expression;

"——— Welcome hither:
"I have begun to *plant* thee, and will labour
"To make thee full of *growing.*"

Again, in King Henry VI. P. III.:

"I'll *plant* Plantagenet, *root* him up who dares." Malone.

[7] — for I use it only.] i. e. for I make nothing else my counsellor. Steevens.

prince, your brother, is royally entertained by Leonato; and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage.

D. John. Will it serve for any model to build mischief on? What is he for a fool, that betroths himself to unquietness?

Bora. Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

D. John. Who? the most exquisite Claudio?

Bora. Even he.

D. John. A proper squire! And who, and who? which way looks he?

Bora. Marry, on* Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

D. John. A very forward March-chick! How came you to this?

Bora. Being entertained for a perfumer, as I was smoking a musty-room[8], comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand, in sad conference[9]: I whipt me behind the arras; and there heard it agreed upon, that the prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtained her, give her to count Claudio.

D. John. Come, come, let us thither; this may prove food to my displeasure: that young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow; if I can cross

* Quarto, *one*.

[8] — smoking a musty room,] The neglect of cleanliness among our ancestors, rendered such precautions too often necessary. In the Harleian Collection of MSS. No. 6850, fol. 90, in the British Museum, is a paper of directions drawn up by Sir John Puckering's Steward, relative to Suffolk Place before Queen Elizabeth's visits to it in 1594. The 15th article is—"The *swetynynge* of the house in all places by any means." Again, in Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, edit. 1632, p. 261: "— the smoake of juniper is in great request with us at Oxford, to *sweeten* our chambers." See also King Henry IV. P. II. Act V. Sc. IV. Steevens.

[9] — in SAD conference:] *Sad* in this, as in future instances, signifies *serious*. So, in The Winter's Tale: "My father, and the gentlemen, are in *sad* talk." Steevens.

him any way, I bless myself every way: You are both sure [1], and will assist me?

Con. To the death, my lord.

D. John. Let us to the great supper; their cheer is the greater, that I am subdued: 'Would the cook were of my mind!—Shall we go prove what's to be done?

Bora. We'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt.*

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Hall in Leonato's House.

Enter Leonato, Antonio, Hero, Beatrice, and others.

Leon. Was not count John here at supper?

Ant. I saw him not.

Beat. How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him, but I am heart-burned an hour after [2].

Hero. He is of a very melancholy disposition.

Beat. He were an excellent man, that were made just in the mid-way between him and Benedick: the one is too like an image, and says nothing; and the other, too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

Leon. Then half signior Benedick's tongue in count John's mouth, and half count John's melancholy in signior Benedick's face,—

Beat. With a good leg, and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would

[1] — both SURE,] i. e. to be depended on. So, in Macbeth:
"Thou *sure* and firm-set earth —." Steevens.

[2] — HEART-BURNED an hour after.] The pain commonly called the *heart-burn*, proceeds from an *acid* humour in the stomach, and is therefore properly enough imputed to *tart* looks. Johnson.

win any woman in the world,—if he could get her good will.

Leon. By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue.

Ant. In faith, she's too curst.

Beat. Too curst is more than curst: I shall lessen God's sending that way: for it is said, *God sends a curst cow short horns;* but to a cow too curst he sends none.

Leon. So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns.

Beat. Just, if he send me no husband; for the which blessing, I am at him upon my knees every morning and evening: Lord! I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face; I had rather lie in the woollen [3].

Leon. You may light upon a husband, that hath no beard.

Beat. What should I do with him? dress him in my apparel, and make him my waiting gentlewoman? He that hath a beard, is more than a youth; and he that hath no beard, is less than a man: and he that is more than a youth, is not for me; and he that is less than a man, I am not for him: Therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the bear-herd, and lead his apes into hell.

Leo. Well then, go you into hell [4]?

[3] — in the WOOLLEN.]. I suppose she means—between blankets, without sheets. STEEVENS.

[4] Well then, &c.] Of the two next speeches Dr. Warburton says,—"All this impious nonsense thrown to the bottom, is the players', and foisted in without rhyme or reason." He therefore puts them in the margin. They do not deserve indeed so honourable a place; yet I am afraid they are too much in the manner of our author, who is sometimes trying to purchase merriment at too dear a rate. JOHNSON.

I have restored the lines omitted. STEEVENS.

Beat. No; but to the gate; and there will the devil meet me, like an old cuckold, with horns on his head, and say, *Get you to heaven, Beatrice, get you to heaven; here's no place for you maids:* so deliver I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter for the heavens; he shows me where the bachelors sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

Ant. Well, niece, [*To Hero,*] I trust, you will be ruled by your father.

Beat. Yes, faith; it is my cousin's duty to make courtesy, and say, *Father, as it please you*:—but yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another courtesy, and say, *Father, as it please me.*

Leon. Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband.

Beat. Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be over-mastered with a piece of valiant dust? to make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I'll none: Adam's sons are my brethren; and truly, I hold it a sin to match in my kindred.

Leon. Daughter, remember, what I told you: if the prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer.

Beat. The fault will be in the musick, cousin, if you be not woo'd in good time; if the prince be too important [5], tell him, there is measure in every thing [6], and so dance out the answer. For hear me,

5 — if the prince be too IMPORTANT,] *Important* here, and in many other places, is *importunate.* JOHNSON.

So, in King Lear, Act IV. Sc. IV.:

" —— great France

" My mourning, and *important* tears hath pitied." STEEVENS.

6 — there is MEASURE in every thing,] A *measure* in old language, beside its ordinary meaning, signified also a *dance.* MALONE.

Hero; Wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace: the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly-modest, as a measure full of state and ancientry; and then comes repentance, and, with his bad legs, falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sinks into his grave.

Leon. Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly.

Beat. I have a good eye, uncle; I can see a church by day-light.

Leon. The revellers are entering, brother; make good room.

Enter Don Pedro, Claudio, Benedick, Balthazar[7]; *Don John, Borachio, Margaret, Ursula, and others, masked.*

D. Pedro. Lady, will you walk about with your friend[8]?

So, in King Richard II.:

"My legs can keep no *measure* in delight,
"When my poor heart no *measure* keeps in grief."

Steevens.

7 — *Balthazar;*] The quarto and folio add—*or dumb John.* Steevens.

Here is another proof that when the first copies of our author's plays were prepared for the press, the transcript was made out by the ear. If the MS. had lain before the transcriber, it is very unlikely that he should have mistaken *Don* for *dumb:* but, by an inarticulate speaker, or inattentive hearer, they might easily be confounded. Malone.

Don John's taciturnity has been already noticed. It seems therefore not improbable that the author himself might have occasionally applied the epithet *dumb* to him. Reed.

8 — your FRIEND?] *Friend*, in our author's time, was the common term for a *lover*. So also in French and Italian. Malone.

Mr. Malone might have added, that this term was equally applicable to both sexes; for, in Measure for Measure, Lucio tells Isabella that her brother had "got his *friend* with child." Steevens.

Hero. So you walk softly, and look sweetly, and say nothing, I am yours for the walk; and, especially, when I walk away.

D. Pedro. With me in your company?

Hero. I may say so, when I please.

D. Pedro. And when please you to say so?

Hero. When I like your favour; for God defend [9], the lute should be like the case [1]!

D. Pedro. My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house is Jove [2].

[9] — for God DEFEND,] i. e. forbid. So in the ancient MS. Romance of the Sowdon of Babyloyne, p. 38:

"But saide, damsele, thou arte woode;
"Thy fadir did us alle *defende*
"Both mete and drinke, and other goode
"That no man shulde them thider sende."

See Othello, Act I. Sc. III. STEEVENS.

[1] — the LUTE should be like the CASE!] i. e. that your face should be as homely and coarse as your mask. THEOBALD.

[2] My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house is JOVE.] The first folio has—*Love;* the quarto, 1600—*Iove;* so that here Mr. Theobald might have found the very reading which, in the following note, he represents as a conjecture of his own. STEEVENS.

'Tis plain, the poet alludes to the story of Baucis and Philemon from Ovid; and this old couple, as the Roman poet describes it, lived in a thatch'd cottage:

—— stipulis et cannâ tecta palustri.

But why, "within this house is *love?*" Though this old pair lived in a cottage, this cottage received two straggling Gods, (Jupiter and Mercury,) under its roof. So Don Pedro is a prince; and though his visor is but ordinary, he would insinuate to Hero, that he has something *godlike* within: alluding either to his dignity, or the qualities of his mind and person. By these circumstances, I am sure, the thought is mended: as, I think verily, the text is too, by the addition of a single letter—'within the house is *Jove.*' Nor is this emendation a little confirmed by another passage in our author, in which he plainly alludes to the same story. As You Like It:

"*Jaques.* O, knowledge ill inhabited, worse than *Jove* in a thatched house!" THEOBALD.

The line of Ovid above quoted is thus translated by Golding, 1587:

HERO. Why, then your visor should be thatch'd.
D. PEDRO. Speak low, if you speak love.
[*Takes her aside.*

BENE. Well, I would you did like me.

MARG. So would not I, for your own sake; for I have many ill qualities.

BENE. Which is one?

MARG. I say my prayers aloud.

BENE. I love you the better; the hearers may cry, Amen.

MARG. God match me with a good dancer!

BALTH. Amen.

MARG. And God keep him out of my sight, when the dance is done!—Answer, clerk.

BALTH. No more words; the clerk is answered.

URS. I know you well enough; you are signior Antonio.

ANT. At a word, I am not.

URS. I know you by the waggling of your head.

ANT. To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

URS. You could never do him so ill-well [3], unless you were the very man: Here's his dry hand [4] up and down; you are he, you are he.

ANT. At a word, I am not.

"The *roofe* thereof was *thatched* all with straw and fennish reede." MALONE.

Perhaps the author meant here to introduce two of the long fourteen-syllable verses so common among our early dramatists, and the measure of Golding's translation:

"*D. Pedro.* My visor is Philemon's roof; within the house is Jove.

"*Hero.* Why, then your visor should be thatch'd.

"*D. Pedro.* Speak low, if you speak love." BLAKEWAY.

[3] You could never do him so ILL-WELL,] A similar phrase occurs in The Merchant of Venice:

"He hath a *better bad* habit of frowning, than the Count Palatine." STEEVENS.

[4] — his DRY hand —] A *dry* hand was anciently regarded as the sign of a cold constitution. To this, Maria, in Twelfth Night, alludes, Act I. Sc. III. STEEVENS.

URS. Come, come; do you think I do not know you by your excellent wit? Can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he: graces will appear, and there's an end.

BEAT. Will you not tell me who told you so?

BENE. No, you shall pardon me.

BEAT. Nor will you not tell me who you are?

BENE. Not now.

BEAT. That I was disdainful,—and that I had my good wit out of the *Hundred merry Tales*[5];— Well, this was signior Benedick that said so.

BENE. What's he?

BEAT. I am sure, you know him well enough.

BENE. Not I, believe me.

BEAT. Did he never make you laugh?

BENE. I pray you, what is he?

BEAT. Why, he is the prince's jester: a very dull fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders[6]: none but libertines delight in him; and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villainy[7];

[5] — *Hundred merry Tales;*] This in Shakspeare's time was the term used to express a jest book, from a popular collection under that name. See the notes at the end of this play. BOSWELL.

[6] — his gift is in devising IMPOSSIBLE slanders:] We should read *impassible*, i. e. slanders so ill invented, that they will pass upon no body. WARBURTON.

Impossible slanders are, I suppose, such slanders as, from their absurdity and impossibility, bring their own confutation with them. JOHNSON.

Johnson's explanation appears to be right. Ford says, in The Merry Wives of Windsor, that he shall search for Falstaff in "*impossible* places." The word *impossible* is also used in a similar sense in Jonson's Sejanus, where Silius accuses Afer of—

"Malicious and manifold applying,
"Foul wresting, and *impossible* construction." M. MASON.

[7] — his VILLAINY;] By which she means his malice and impiety. By his impious jests, she insinuates, he *pleased* libertines; and by his *devising slanders* of them, he angered them. WARBURTON.

for he both pleaseth men, and angers them, and then they laugh at him, and beat him: I am sure, he is in the fleet; I would he had boarded me.

Bene. When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

Beat. Do, do: he'll but break a comparison or two on me; which, peradventure, not marked, or not laughed at, strikes him into melancholy; and then there's a partridge' wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night. [*Musick within.*] We must follow the leaders.

Bene. In every good thing.

Beat. Nay, if they lead to any ill, I will leave them at the next turning.

[*Dance. Then exeunt all but Don John, Borachio, and Claudio.*

D. John. Sure, my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it: The ladies follow her, and but one visor remains.

Bora. And that is Claudio: I know him by his bearing [8].

D. John. Are not you signior Benedick?

Claud. You know me well; I am he.

D. John. Signior, you are very near my brother in his love: he is enamoured on Hero; I pray you, dissuade him from her, she is no equal for his birth: you may do the part of an honest man in it.

Claud. How know you he loves her?

D. John. I heard him swear his affection.

Bora. So did I too; and he swore he marry her to-night.

[8] — his BEARING.] i. e. his carriage, his demeanor. So, in Measure for Measure:

"How I may formally in person *bear* me." STEEVENS.

D. John. Come, let us to the banquet.

[*Exeunt Don John and Borachio.*

Claud. Thus answer I in name of Benedick,
But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio.—
'Tis certain so;—the prince woos for himself.
Friendship is constant in all other things,
Save in the office and affairs of love:
Therefore [9], all hearts in love use their own tongues;
Let every eye negotiate for itself,
And trust no agent: for beauty is a witch,
Against whose charms faith melteth into blood [1].
This is an accident of hourly proof,
Which I mistrusted not: Farewell therefore, Hero!

Re-enter Benedick.

Bene. Count Claudio?

Claud. Yea, the same.

Bene. Come, will you go with me?

Claud. Whither?

Bene. Even to the next willow, about your own business, count. What fashion will you wear the

9 Therefore, &c.] *Let*, which is found in the next line, is understood here. Malone.

1 — beauty is a witch,
Against whose charms faith melteth into BLOOD.] i. e. as wax when opposed to the fire kindled by a witch, no longer preserves the figure of the person whom it was designed to represent, but flows into a shapeless lump; so fidelity, when confronted with beauty, dissolves into our ruling passion, and is lost there like a drop of water in the sea.

That *blood* signifies (as Mr. Malone has also observed) *amorous heat*, will appear from the following passage in All's Well that Ends Well, Act III. Sc. VII.:

"Now his important *blood* will nought deny
"That she'll demand."

Again, in Chapman's version of the third Iliad, Helen, speaking of Agamemnon, says:

"And one that was my brother in law, when I contain'd my *blood*,
"And was more worthy:—" Steevens.

garland of? About your neck, like an usurer's chain[2]? or under your arm, like a lieutenant's scarf? You must wear it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero.

Claud. I wish him joy of her.

Bene. Why, that's spoken like an honest drover; so they sell bullocks. But did you think, the prince would have served you thus?

Claud. I pray you, leave me.

Bene. Ho! now you strike like the blind man; 'twas the boy that stole your meat, and you'll beat the post.

Claud. If it will not be, I'll leave you. [*Exit.*

Bene. Alas, poor hurt fowl! Now will he creep into sedges.——But, that my lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me! The prince's fool!—Ha! it may be, I go under that title, because I am merry.—Yea; but so; I am apt to do myself wrong: I am not so reputed: it is the base, the bitter disposition of Beatrice, that puts the world into her person[3], and so gives me out. Well, I'll be revenged as I may.

[2] — usurer's CHAIN?] *Chains* of gold, of considerable value, were in our author's time, usually worn by wealthy citizens, and others, in the same manner as they now are, on publick occasions, by the Aldermen of London. See The Puritan, or the Widow of Watling-Street, Act III. Sc. III.; Albumazar, Act I. Sc. VII. and other pieces. REED.

Usury seems about this time to have been a common topick of invective, I have three or four dialogues, pasquils, and discourses on the subject, printed before the year 1600. From every one of these it appears, that the merchants were the chief usurers of the age. STEEVENS.

So, in The Choice of Change, containing the Triplicitie of Divinitie, Philosophie, and Poetrie, by S. R. Gent. 4to. 1598: "Three sortes of people, in respect of use in necessitie, may be accounted good:—*Merchantes*, for they may play the *usurers*, instead of the Jewes." Again, ibid.: "There is a scarcitie of Jewes, because Christians make an occupation of *usurie*."

MALONE.

Re-enter Don PEDRO.

D. PEDRO. Now, signior, where's the count; Did you see him?

Bene. Troth, my lord, I have played the part of lady Fame. I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren [4]; I told him, and, I think, I told him true, that your grace had got the good will of this young lady [5]; and I offered him my company to a willow tree, either to make him a garland, as

[3] —it is the base, the bitter disposition of Beatrice, that puts the world into her person,] That is, 'It is the disposition of Beatrice, who takes upon her to personate the world, and therefore represents the world as saying what she only says herself.'

The old copies read—"*base*, though *bitter*:" but I do not understand how *base* and *bitter* are inconsistent, or why what is *bitter* should not be *base*. I believe, we may safely read,—'It is the base, *the* bitter disposition.' JOHNSON.

I have adopted Dr. Johnson's emendation, though I once thought it unnecessary. STEEVENS.

[4] —as melancholy as a LODGE in a warren;] A parallel thought occurs in the first chapter of Isaiah, where the prophet, describing the desolation of Judah, says: "The daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a *lodge* in a garden of cucumbers," &c. I am informed, that near Aleppo, these lonely buildings are still made use of, it being necessary, that the fields where water-melons, cucumbers, &c. are raised, should be regularly watched. I learn from Tho. Newton's Herball to the Bible, 8vo. 1587, that "so soone as the cucumbers, &c. be gathered, these lodges are abandoned of the watchmen and keepers, and no more frequented." From these forsaken buildings, it should seem, the prophet takes his comparison. STEEVENS.

[5] —of this young lady;] Benedick speaks of Hero as if she were on the stage. Perhaps, both she and Leonato were meant to make their entrance with Don Pedro. When Beatrice enters, she is spoken of as coming in with only Claudio. STEEVENS.

I conceive that in the usage of Shakspeare's time, and even of our own, the demonstrative pronoun is sometimes used when the thing spoken of is not actually present, if it has been the subject of previous conversation. So, in this play: "shall quips, and sentences, and *these* paper bullets of the brain," and in numberless other instances. BLAKEWAY.

being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipped.

D. Pedro. To be whipped! What's his fault?

Bene. The flat transgression of a school-boy; who, being overjoy'd with finding a bird's nest, shows it his companion, and he steals it.

D. Pedro. Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? The transgression is in the stealer.

Bene. Yet it had not been amiss, the rod had been made, and the garland too; for the garland he might have worn himself; and the rod he might have bestow'd on you, who, as I take it, have stol'n his bird's nest.

D. Pedro. I will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.

Bene. If their singing answer your saying, by my faith, you say honestly.

D. Pedro. The lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you; the gentleman, that danced with her, told her, she is much wronged by you.

Bene. O, she misused me past the endurance of a block; an oak, but with one green leaf on it, would have answered her; my very visor began to assume life, and scold [6] with her: She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the prince's jester; that I was duller than a great thaw; huddling jest upon jest, with such impossible conveyance [7], upon me, that I stood like a man at a mark,

[6] —my very visor began to assume life, and scold—] 'Tis whimsical, that a similar thought should have been found in the tenth Thebaid of Statius, v. 658:

"——ipsa insanire videtur
"Sphynx galeæ custos—." STEEVENS.

[7] —such IMPOSSIBLE conveyance,] Dr. Warburton reads *impassable*: Sir Thomas Hanmer *impetuous*, and Dr. Johnson *importable*, which, says he, is used by Spenser, in a sense very congruous to this passage, for *insupportable, or not to be sustained*.

with a whole army shooting at me: She speaks poniards [8], and every word stabs: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living near her, she would infect to the north star. I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgressed: she would have made Hercules have turned spit; yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too. Come, talk not of her; you shall find her the infernal Até in good apparel [9]. I would to God,

Also by the last translators of the Apocrypha; and therefore such a word as Shakspeare may be supposed to have written. REED.

Importable is very often used by Lidgate, in his Prologue to the translation of The Tragedies gathered by Ihon Bochas, &c. as well as by Holinshed.

Impossible may be licentiously used for *unaccountable*. Beatrice has already said, that Benedick invents *impossible* slanders.

So, in The Fair Maid of the Inn, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"You would look for some most *impossible* antick."

Again, in The Roman Actor, by Massinger:

"———— to lose

"Ourselves, by building on *impossible* hopes." STEEVENS.

Impossible may have been what Shakspeare wrote, and be used in the sense of *incredible* or *inconceivable*, both here and in the beginning of the scene, where Beatrice speaks of *impossible* slanders. M. MASON.

I believe the meaning is—'with a rapidity equal to that of *jugglers*, who appear to perform *impossibilities*.' We have the same epithet again in Twelfth-Night: "There is no Christian can ever believe such *impossible* passages of grossness." So Ford says, in The Merry Wives of Windsor:—"I will examine *impossible* places." Again, in Julius Cæsar:

"Now bid me run,

"And I will strive with things *impossible*,

"And get the better of them."

Conveyance was the common term in our author's time for *sleight of hand*.

So, in K. Henry VI. P. III.:

"Thy sly *conveyance*, and thy lord's false love." MALONE.

[8] She SPEAKS PONIARDS,] So, in Hamlet:

"I'll *speak daggers* to her—." STEEVENS.

[9] —the infernal ATE in good apparel.] This is a pleasant allusion to the custom of ancient poets and painters, who represent the *Furies* in rags. WARBURTON.

some scholar would conjure her[1]; for, certainly, while she is here, a man may live as quiet in hell, as in a sanctuary; and people sin upon purpose, because they would go thither; so, indeed, all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follow her.

Enter CLAUDIO, BEATRICE, HERO, *and* LEONATO.

D. PEDRO. Look, here she comes.

Bene. Will your grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes, that you can devise to send me on; I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the farthest inch of Asia; bring you the length of Prester John's foot; fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard[2]; do you any embassage to the Pigmies, rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy: You have no employment for me?

Até is not one of the *Furies*, but the *Goddess of Revenge*, or *Discord*. STEEVENS.

[1] —some scholar would CONJURE her;] As Shakspeare always attributes to his *exorcists* the power of raising spirits, he gives his *conjurer*, in this place, the power of laying them. M. MASON.

[2] —bring you the length of Prester John's foot; fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard;] i. e. I will undertake the hardest task, rather than have any conversation with lady Beatrice. Alluding to the difficulty of access to either of those monarchs, but more particularly to the former.

So, Cartwright, in his comedy called The Siege, or Love's Convert, 1651:

"—bid me take the Parthian king by the beard; or draw an eye-tooth from the jaw royal of the Persian monarch."

Such an achievement, however, Huon of Bourdeaux was sent to perform, and performed it. See chap. 46, edit. 1601: "—he opened his mouth, and tooke out his foure great teeth, and then cut off his beard, and tooke thereof as much as pleased him."

STEEVENS.

"Thou must goe to the citie of Babylon to the Admiral Gaudisse, to bring me thy hand full of the heare of his beard, and foure of his greatest teeth. Alas, my lord, (quoth the Barrons,) we see well you desire greatly his death, when you charge him with such a message." *Huon of Bourdeaux*, ch. 17. BOWLE.

D. Pedro. None, but to desire your good company.

Bene. O God, sir, here's a dish I love not; I cannot endure my lady Tongue [3]. [*Exit.*

D. Pedro. Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of signior Benedick.

Beat. Indeed, my lord, he lent it me a while; and I gave him use for it [4], a double heart for his single one: marry, once before, he won it of me with false dice, therefore your grace may well say, I have lost it.

D. Pedro. You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.

Beat. So I would not he should do me, my lord, lest I should prove the mother of fools. I have brought count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek.

D. Pedro. Why, how now, count? wherefore are you sad?

Claud. Not sad, my lord.

D. Pedro. How then? Sick?

Claud. Neither, my lord.

Beat. The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well: but civil, count; civil as an orange [5], and something of that jealous complexion [6].

D. Pedro. I'faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true; though, I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false. Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won; I have broke with her father, and his good will obtained: name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy!

3 — my lady Tongue.] Thus the quarto 1600. The folio reads—"*this* lady Tongue." Steevens.

4 — I gave him use for it,] *Use*, in our author's time, meant *interest* of money. Malone.

5 — civil as an orange,] This conceit occurs likewise in Nashe's Four Letters Confuted, 1592: "For the order of my life, it is as *civil as an orange*." Steevens.

6 — of that jealous complexion.] Thus the quarto 1600: the folio reads, "of *a* jealous complexion." Steevens.

Leon. Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes: his grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it!

Beat. Speak, count, 'tis your cue.

Claud. Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy, if I could say how much.—Lady, as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you, and dote upon the exchange.

Beat. Speak, cousin; or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let him not speak, neither.

D. Pedro. In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

Beat. Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool[7], it keeps on the windy side of care:—My cousin tells him in his ear, that he is in her heart.

Claud. And so she doth, cousin.

Beat. Good lord, for alliance[8]!—Thus goes every one to the world but I, and I am sun-burned[9];

[7] —poor fool,] This was formerly an expression of tenderness. See King Lear, last scene: "And my *poor fool* is hang'd." Malone.

[8] Good lord, for ALLIANCE!] Claudio has just called Beatrice *cousin*. I suppose, therefore, the meaning is,—'Good Lord, here have I got a new kinsman by marriage.' Malone.

I cannot understand these words, unless they imply a wish for the speaker's *alliance* with a husband. Steevens.

I explain them: 'Good Lord, how many alliances are forming! Every one is likely to be married but me.' Boswell.

[9] Thus goes every one to the WORLD but I, and I am SUN-BURNED;] What is it, *to go to the world?* perhaps, to enter by marriage into a settled state; but why is the unmarried lady *sun-burnt?* I believe we should read,—'Thus goes every one to the *wood* but I, and I am sun-burnt. Thus does every one but I find a shelter, and I am left exposed to wind and *sun*.' "The nearest way to the *wood*," is a phrase for the readiest means to any end. It is said of a woman, who accepts a worse match than those which she had refused, that "she has passed through the *wood*, and at last taken a crooked stick." But conjectural criticism has always something to abate its confidence. Shakspeare, in All's Well that Ends Well, uses the phrase, *to go to the world*, for *marriage*.

I may sit in a corner, and cry, heigh ho! for a husband.

D. Pedro. Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

Beat. I would rather have one of your father's getting: Hath your grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them.

D. Pedro. Will you have me, lady?

Beat. No, my lord, unless I might have another for working-days; your grace is too costly to wear every day:—But, I beseech your grace, pardon me; I was born to speak all mirth, and no matter.

D. Pedro. Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you; for, out of question, you were born in a merry hour.

Beat. No, sure, my lord, my mother cry'd; but then there was a star danced, and under that was I born.—Cousins, God give you joy!

Leon. Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

Beat. I cry you mercy, uncle.—By your grace's pardon. [*Exit Beatrice.*

D. Pedro. By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady.

Leon. There's little of the melancholy element in her [1], my lord: she is never sad, but when she sleeps; and not ever sad then; for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamed of unhappiness [2], and waked herself with laughing.

So that my emendation depends only on the opposition of *wood* to *sun-burnt*. Johnson.

"I am *sun-burnt*" may mean, 'I have lost my beauty, and am consequently no longer such an object as can tempt a man to marry.' Steevens.

[1] There's little of the MELANCHOLY ELEMENT in her,] "Does not our life consist of the *four elements?*" says Sir Toby, in Twelfth-Night. So, also in King Henry V.: "He is pure air and fire, and the *dull elements* of *earth* and *water* never appear in him." Malone.

D. Pedro. She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

Leon. O, by no means; she mocks all her wooers out of suit.

D. Pedro. She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

Leon. O lord, my lord, if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad.

D. Pedro. Count Claudio, when mean you to go to church?

Claud. To-morrow, my lord: Time goes on crutches, till love have all his rites.

Leon. Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence a just seven-night; and a time too brief too, to have all things answer my mind.

D. Pedro. Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing; but, I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us; I will, in the interim, undertake one of Hercules' labours; which is, to bring signior Benedick, and the lady Beatrice, into a mountain of affection, the one with the other[3]. I

[2] — she hath often dreamed of UNHAPPINESS,] So all the editions; but Mr. Theobald alters it to, *an happiness*, having no conception that *unhappiness* meant any thing but misfortune, and that, he thinks, she could not laugh at. He had never heard that it signified a wild, wanton, unlucky trick. Thus Beaumont and Fletcher, in their comedy of The Maid of the Mill:

"My *dreams* are like my thoughts, honest and innocent:
"Yours are *unhappy*." WARBURTON.

[3] — into a MOUNTAIN of affection, the one with the other.] A *mountain of affection with one another*, is a strange expression, yet I know not well how to change it. Perhaps it was originally written to bring Benedick and Beatrice into a *mooting* of affection; to bring them not to any more *mootings* of contention, but to a *mooting* or conversation of love. This reading is confirmed by the preposition *with*; 'a mountain *with* each other,' or 'affection *with* each other,' cannot be used, but 'a mooting *with* each other' is proper and regular. JOHNSON.

Uncommon as the word proposed by Dr. Johnson may appear,

would fain have it a match; and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

Leon. My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights' watchings.

Claud. And I, my lord.

D. Pedro. And you too, gentle Hero?

Hero. I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband.

D. Pedro. And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know: thus far can I praise him; he is of a noble strain [4], of approved valour,

it is used in several of the old plays. So, in Glapthorne's Wit in a Constable, 1639:

" ——— one who never
" Had *mooted* in the hall, or seen the revels
" Kept in the house at Christmas."

Again, in The Return from Parnassus, 1606:

" It is a plain case, whereon I *mooted* in our temple."

Again:

" —— at a *mooting* in our temple." *Ibid.*

And yet, all that I believe is meant by a *mountain of affection* is, *a great deal of affection*.

In one of Stanyhurst's poems is the following phrase to denote a large quantity of love:

" Lumps of love promist, nothing perform'd," &c.

Again, in the Renegado, by Massinger:

" —— 'tis but parting with
" *A mountain* of vexation."

Thus, also in King Henry VIII. we find " a *sea* of glory." In Hamlet, " a *sea* of troubles." Again, in Howel's History of Venice: " though they see *mountains* of miseries heaped on one's back." Again, in Bacon's History of King Henry VII.: " Perkin sought to corrupt the servants to the lieutenant of the tower by *mountains* of promises." Again, in The Comedy of Errors: " — the *mountain* of mad flesh that claims marriage of me." Little can be inferred from the present offence against grammar; an offence which may not strictly be imputable to Shakspeare, but rather to the negligence or ignorance of his transcribers or printers. Steevens.

Shakspeare has many phrases equally harsh. He who would hazard such expressions as *a storm of fortune*, a *vale of years*, and *a tempest of provocation*, would not scruple to write *a mountain of affection*. Malone.

and confirmed honesty. I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall fall in love with Benedick:—and I, with your two helps, will so practice on Benedick, that, in despite of his quick wit and his queasy stomach [5], he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer; his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love-gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Another Room in LEONATO's House.

Enter Don JOHN and BORACHIO.

D. JOHN. It is so; the count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

BORA. Yea, my lord; but I can cross it.

D. JOHN. Any bar, any cross, any impediment will be medicinable to me: I am sick in displeasure to him; and whatsoever comes athwart his affection, ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage?

BORA. Not honestly, my lord; but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

D. JOHN. Show me briefly how.

4 — a NOBLE strain,] i. e. descent, lineage. So, in The Fairy Queen, b. iv. c. viii. s. 33:

"Sprung from the auncient stocke of prince's *straine*."

Again, b. v. c. ix. s. 32:

"Sate goodly temperaunce in garments clene,
"And sacred reverence yborn of heavenly *strene*."

It was used in the same sense by Shadwell, in his Virtuoso, Act I.: "Gentlemen care not upon what *strain* they get their sons." REED.

Again, in King Lear, Act V. Sc. III.:

"Sir, you have shown to-day your valiant *strain*." STEEVENS.

5 — QUEASY stomach,] i. e. squeamish. So, in Antony and Cleopatra:

"Who *queasy* with his insolence already —." STEEVENS.

Bora. I think, I told your lordship, a year since, how much I am in the favour of Margaret, the waiting-gentlewoman to Hero.

D. John. I remember.

Bora. I can, at any unseasonable instant of the night, appoint her to look out at her lady's chamber-window.

D. John. What life is in that, to be the death of this marriage?

Bora. The poison of that lies in you to temper. Go you to the prince your brother; spare not to tell him, that he hath wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio (whose estimation do you mightily hold up) to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero.

D. John. What proof shall I make of that?

Bora. Proof enough to misuse the prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill Leonato: Look you for any other issue?

D. John. Only to despite them, I will endeavour any thing.

Bora[6]. Go then, find me a meet hour to draw

[6] *Bora.* Go then, find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and the count Claudio, alone: tell them, that you know that Hero loves me;——offer them instances; which shall bear no less likelihood, than to see ME at her chamber-window; hear me call Margaret, Hero; hear Margaret term me CLAUDIO; and bring them to see this, the very night before the intended wedding:] Thus the whole stream of the editions from the first quarto downwards. I am obliged here to give a short account of the plot depending, that the emendation I have made may appear the more clear and unquestionable. The business stands thus: Claudio, a favourite of the Arragon prince, is, by his intercessions with her father, to be married to fair Hero; Don John, natural brother of the prince, and a hater of Claudio, is in his spleen zealous to disappoint the match. Borachio, a rascally dependant on Don John, offers his assistance, and engages to break off the marriage by this stratagem. 'Tell the prince and Claudio (says he) that Hero is in love with *me;* they won't believe it: offer them proofs, as, that they shall see me converse with her in her

Don Pedro and the count Claudio, alone: tell them, that you know that Hero loves me; intend a kind of zeal[7] both to the prince and Claudio, as—in love of

chamber-window. I am in the good graces of her waiting-woman, Margaret; and I'll prevail with Margaret, at a dead hour of night, to personate her mistress Hero; do you then bring the Prince and Claudio to overhear our discourse; and they shall have the torment to hear *me* address Margaret by the name of Hero, and her say sweet things to me by the name of Claudio.'—This is the substance of Borachio's device to make Hero suspected of disloyalty; and to break off her match with Claudio. But, in the name of common sense, could it displease Claudio, to hear his mistress making use of *his* name tenderly? If he saw another man with her, and heard her call him Claudio, he might reasonable think her betrayed, but not have the same reason to accuse her of disloyalty. Besides, how could her naming Claudio, make the Prince and Claudio believe that she loved Borachio, as he desires Don John to insinuate to them that she did? The circumstances weighed, there is no doubt but the passage ought to be reformed, as I have settled in the text—"hear me call Margaret, Hero; hear Margaret term me, *Borachio*." THEOBALD.

Though I have followed Mr. Theobald's direction, I am not convinced that this change of names is absolutely necessary. Claudio would naturally resent the circumstance of hearing another called by his own name; because, in that case, baseness of treachery would appear to be aggravated by wantonness of insult; and, at the same time, he would imagine the person so distinguished to be Borachio, because Don John was previously to have informed both him and Don Pedro, that Borachio was the favoured lover. STEEVENS.

We should surely read *Borachio* instead of *Claudio*. There could be no reason why Margaret should call him *Claudio;* and that would ill agree with what Borachio says in the last Act, where he declares that Margaret knew not what she did when she spoke to him. M. MASON.

Claudio would naturally be enraged to find his mistress, Hero, (for such he would imagine Margaret to be,) address Borachio, or any other man, by his name, as he might suppose that she called him by the name of Claudio in consequence of a secret agreement between them, as a cover, in case she were overheard; and *he* would know, without a possibility of error, that it was not Claudio, with whom, in fact, she conversed. MALONE.

7 — INTEND a kind of zeal —] i. e. pretend. So, in King Richard III.:

"*Intending* deep suspicion." STEEVENS.

your brother's honour who hath made this match; and his friend's reputation, who is thus like to be cozened with the semblance of a maid,—that you have discovered thus. They will scarcely believe this without trial: offer them instances; which shall bear no less likelihood, than to see me at her chamber-window; hear me call Margaret, Hero; hear Margaret term me [Claudio]; and bring them to see this, the very night before the intended wedding: for, in the mean time, I will so fashion the matter, that Hero shall be absent; and there shall appear such seeming truth of Hero's disloyalty, that jealousy shall be call'd assurance, and all the preparation overthrown.

D. John. Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice: Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

Bora. Be you constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

D. John. I will presently go learn their day of marriage. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

LEONATO's Garden.

Enter BENEDICK *and a Boy.*

Bene. Boy,—

Boy. Signior.

Bene. In my chamber-window lies a book; bring it hither to me in the orchard [8].

Boy. I am here already, sir.

[8] — in the ORCHARD.] *Orchard*, in our author's time, signified a *garden*. MALONE.

So, in Romeo and Juliet:

"The *orchard* walls are high, and hard to climb."

STEEVENS.

Bene. I know that;—but I would have thee hence, and here again. [*Exit Boy.*]—I do much wonder, that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn, by falling in love: And such a man is Claudio. I have known, when there was no musick with him but the drum and fife; and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe: I have known, when he would have walked ten mile afoot, to see a good armour; and now will he lie ten nights awake, carving the fashion of a new doublet [9]. He was wont to speak plain, and to the purpose, like an honest man, and a soldier; and now is he turn'd orthographer [1]; his words are a very fantasti-

9 — carving the fashion of a new doublet.] This folly, so conspicuous in the gallants of former ages, is laughed at by all our comic writers. So, in Greene's Farewell to Folly, 1617: "We are almost as fantastic as the English gentleman that is painted naked, with a pair of sheers in his hand, as not being resolved after what fashion to have his coat cut." Steevens.

The English gentleman in the above extract alludes to a plate in Borde's Introduction of Knowledge. In Barnaby Riche's Faults and Nothing but Faults, 4to. 1606, p. 6, we have the following account of a Fashionmonger: "— here comes first the Fashionmonger that spends his time in the contemplation of sutes. Alas! good gentleman, there is something amisse with him. I perceive it by his sad and heavie countenance: for my life his tailer and he are at some square about the making of his new sute; he hath cut it after the old stampe of some stale fashion that is at the least of a whole fortnight's standing." Reed.

The English gentleman is represented [by Borde] naked, with a pair of tailor's sheers in one hand, and a piece of cloth on his arm, with the following verses:

"I am an Englishman, and naked I stand here,
"Musing in my mynde what rayment I shall were,
"For now I will ware this, and now I will were that,
"Now I will were I cannot tell what," &c.

See Camden's Remaines, 1614, p. 17. Malone.

1 — orthographer;] The old copies read—*orthography*. Corrected by Mr. Pope. Steevens.

cal banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell, I think not: I will not be sworn, but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair; yet I am well: another is wise; yet I am well: another virtuous; yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain; wise, or I'll none; virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her; fair, or I'll never look on her; mild, or come not near me; noble, or not I for an angel; of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God[2]. Ha! the prince and monsieur Love! I will hide me in the arbour. [*Withdraws.*

[2] —and her HAIR shall be of what COLOUR it please God.] Perhaps Benedick alludes to a fashion, very common in the time of Shakspeare, that of *dying the hair*.

Stubbes, in his Anatomy of Abuses, 1595, speaking of the attires of women's heads, says: "If any have haire of her owne naturall growing, which is not faire ynough, then will they *die* it in divers colours." STEEVENS.

The practice of dying the hair was one of those fashions so frequent before and in Queen Elizabeth's time, as to be thought worthy of particular animadversion from the pulpit. In the Homily against excess of apparel, b. l. 1547, after mentioning the common excuses of some nice and vain women for painting their faces, *dying their hair*, &c. the preacher breaks out into the following invective: "Who can paynt her face, and curle her heere, and *chaunge it into an unnaturall coloure*, but therein doth worke reprofe to her Maker who made her? as thoughe she coulde make herselfe more comelye than God hath appoynted the measure of her beautie. What do these women but go about to refourme that which God hath made? not knowyng that all thynges naturall is the worke of God: and thynges disguysed and unnatural be the workes of the devyll," &c. REED.

Or he may allude to the fashion of wearing *false hair*; which was also a practice of that time. So, in a subsequent scene: "I like the new tire within, if the *hair* were a thought browner."

Again, in Lily's Midas, 1592:

Enter Don PEDRO, LEONATO, *and* CLAUDIO.

D. PEDRO. Come, shall we hear this musick?
CLAUD. Yea, my good lord:—How still the evening is,
As hush'd on purpose to grace harmony!
D. PEDRO. See you where Benedick hath hid himself?
CLAUD. O, very well, my lord: the musick ended,
We'll fit the kid-fox with a penny-worth [3].

"*Pipinetta*. My mistresse would rise, and lacks your worship to fetch her haire.

"*Petulus*, Why, is it not on her head?

"*Pip*. Methinks it should; but I mean the haire that she must weare to-day.

"*Li*. Why, doth she weare any haire but her owne?

"*Pip*. In faith, sir, no; I am sure it is her owne when she pays for it."

Fines Moryson, describing the dress of the ladies of Shakspeare's time, says: "Gentlewomen virgins weare gownes close to the body, and aprons of fine linen, and go bareheaded, with their hair curiously knotted, and raised at the forehead, but *many* (against the cold, as they say,) weare caps of hair that *is not their own*." See The Two Gentlemen of Verona. MALONE.

The practice of colouring the hair in Shakspeare's time, receives considerable illustration from Marie Magdalene her Life and Repentance, 1567, where *Infidelitie* (the Vice) recommends her to a goldsmith to die her hair yellow with some preparation, when it should fade; and *Carnal Concupiscence* tells her likewise that there was "other geare besides goldsmith's water," for the purpose. DOUCE.

[3] *D. Pedro*. See you where Benedick hath hid himself?
Claudio. O, very well, my lord: the musick ended,
We'll fit the KID-FOX with a penny-worth.] i. e. we will be even with the fox now discovered. So the word *kid*, or *kidde*, signifies in Chaucer:

"The soothfastness that now is hid,
"Without coverture shall be *kid*,
"When I undoen have this dreming."
Romaunt of the Rose, 2171, &c.

"Perceiv'd or shew'd.
"He *kidde* anon his bone was not broken."
Troilus and Cressida, lib. i. 208.

Enter BALTHAZAR, *with musick*[4].

D. Pedro. Come, Balthazar, we'll hear that song again[5].

Balth. O good my lord, tax not so bad a voice
To slander musick any more than once.

D. Pedro. It is the witness still of excellency,
To put a strange face on his own perfection:—
I pray thee, sing, and let me woo no more.

Balth. Because you talk of wooing, I will sing:
Since many a wooer doth commence his suit
To her he thinks not worthy; yet he woos;
Yet will he swear, he loves.

D. Pedro. Nay, pray thee, come:
Or, if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Do it in notes.

Balth. Note this before my notes,
There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.

"With that anon sterte out daungere,
"Out of the place where he was hidde;
"His malice in his cheere was *kidde*."

Romaunt of the Rose, 2130. GREY.

It is not impossible but that Shakspeare chose on this occasion to employ an antiquated word; and yet if any future editor should choose to read—*hid* fox, he may observe that Hamlet has said—"*Hide* fox and all after." STEEVENS.

Dr. Warburton reads as Mr. Steevens proposes. MALONE.

A *kid-fox* seems to be no more than a *young fox* or *cub*. In As You Like It, we have the expression of—"two *dog-apes*." RITSON.

4 —*with musick*.] I am not sure that this stage-direction (taken from the quarto 1600,) is proper. Balthazar might have been designed at once for a vocal and an instrumental performer. Shakspeare's orchestra was hardly numerous; and the first folio, instead of Balthazar, only gives us *Jacke Wilson*, the name of the actor who represented him. STEEVENS.

5 Come, BALTHAZAR, we'll hear that song again.] *Balthazar*, the musician and servant to Don Pedro, was perhaps thus named from the celebrated Baltazarini, called De Beaujoyeux, an Italian performer on the violin, who was in the highest fame and favour at the court of Henry II. of France, 1577. BURNEY.

D. Pedro. Why these are very crotchets that he speaks;
Note, notes, forsooth, and noting[6]! [*Musick.*
Bene. Now, *Divine air!* now is his soul ravished!—Is it not strange, that sheeps' guts should hale souls out of men's bodies?—Well, a horn for my money, when all's done.

Balthazar sings.

I.

Balth. Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more[7],
Men were deceivers ever;
One foot in sea, and one on shore;
To one thing constant never:
Then sigh not so,
But let them go,
And be you blith and bonny;
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into, Hey nonny, nonny.

II.

Sing no more ditties, sing no mo
Of dumps so dull and heavy;
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy.
Then sigh not so, &c.

D. Pedro. By my troth, a good song.
Balth. And an ill singer, my lord.
D. Pedro. Ha? no; no, faith; thou singest well enough for a shift.

[6] —and NOTING!] The old copies—*nothing*. The correction was made by Mr. Theobald. MALONE.

[7] *Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,*]
"Weep no more, woful shepherds, weep no more."
Milton's Lycidas. STEEVENS.

Bene. [*Aside.*] An he had been a dog, that should have howled thus, they would have hanged him: and, I pray God, his bad voice bode no mischief! I had as lief have heard the night-raven [8], come what plague could have come after it.

D. Pedro. Yea, marry; [*To Claudio.*]—Dost thou hear, Balthazar? I pray thee, get us some excellent musick; for to-morrow night we would have it at the lady Hero's chamber-window.

Balth. The best I can, my lord.

D. Pedro. Do so: farewell. [*Exeunt Balthazar and musick.*] Come hither, Leonato: What was it you told me of to-day? that your niece Beatrice was in love with signior Benedick?

Claud. O, ay:—Stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits [9]. [*Aside to Pedro.*] I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

[8] —I pray God, his bad voice BODE NO MISCHIEF! I had as lief have heard the NIGHT-RAVEN,] i. e. the owl; νυκτικοραξ. So, in King Henry VI. P. III. Sc. VI.:

"The night-crow *cried*, aboding luckless time." STEEVENS.

Thus also, Milton, in L'Allegro:

"And the *night-raven* sings." DOUCE.

[9] Stalk on, stalk on; the fowl sits.] This is an allusion to the *stalking-horse;* a horse either real or factitious, by which the fowler anciently sheltered himself from the sight of the game.

So, in The Honest Lawyer, 1616:

"Lye there, thou happy warranted case
"Of any villain. Thou hast been my *stalking-horse*
"Now these ten months."

Again, in the 25th Song of Drayton's Polyolbion:

"One underneath his *horse* to get a shoot doth *stalk*."

Again, in his Muses' Elysium:

"Then underneath my horse, I *stalk* my game to strike."

STEEVENS.

Again, in New Shreds of the Old Snare, by John Gee, quarto, p. 23: "Methinks I behold the cunning fowler, such as I have knowne in the fenne countries and els-where, that doe shoot at woodcockes, snipes, and wilde fowle, by sneaking behind a painted cloth which they carrey before them, having pictured in it the

Leon. No, nor I neither; but most wonderful, that she should so dote on signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviours seemed ever to abhor.

Bene. Is't possible? Sits the wind in that corner? [*Aside.*

Leon. By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it; but that she loves him with an enraged affection,—it is past the infinite of thought[1].

shape of a horse; which while the silly fowle gazeth on, it is knockt down with hale shot, and so put in the fowler's budget."

Reed.

A *stalking-bull*, with a cloth thrown over him, was sometimes used for deceiving the game; as may be seen from a very elegant cut in Loniceri Venatus et Aucupium. Francofurti, 1582, 4to. and from a print by F. Valeggio, with the motto —

Veste boves operit, dum sturnos fallit edaces. Douce.

[1] — but that she loves him with an enraged affection,—it is past the INFINITE of thought.] It is impossible to make sense and grammar of this speech. And the reason is, that the two beginnings of two different sentences are jumbled together and made one. For—" but that she loves him with an enraged affection," is only part of a sentence which should conclude thus,—' is most certain.' But a new idea striking the speaker, he leaves his sentence unfinished, and turns to another,—" it is past the infinite of thought,"—which is likewise left unfinished; for it should conclude thus—' to say how great that affection is.' Those broken disjointed sentences are usual in conversation. However, there is one one word wrong, which yet perplexes the sense; and that is *infinite*. Human thought cannot surely be called *infinite* with any kind of figurative propriety. I suppose the true reading was *definite*. This makes the passage intelligible. ' It is past the *definite* of thought,'—i. e. it *cannot be defined* or conceived how great that affection is. Shakspeare uses the word again in the same sense in Cymbeline:

" For ideots, in this case of favour, would
" Be wisely *definite* —."

i. e. could tell how to pronounce or determine in the case.

Warburton.

Here are difficulties raised only to show how easily they can be removed. The plain sense is, ' I know not what to think *otherwise*, but that she loves him with an *enraged* affection: It (*this af-*

D. Pedro. May be, she doth but counterfeit.

Claud. 'Faith, like enough.

Leon. O God! counterfeit! There never was counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion, as she discovers it.

D. Pedro. Why, what effects of passion shows she?

Claud. Bait the hook well; this fish will bite. [*Aside.*

Leon. What effects, my lord! She will sit you,—You heard my daughter tell you how.

Claud. She did, indeed.

D. Pedro. How, how, I pray you? You amaze me: I would have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

Leon. I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick.

Bene. [*Aside.*] I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot, sure, hide itself in such reverence.

Claud. He hath ta'en the infection; hold it up. [*Aside.*

D. Pedro. Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

Leon. No; and swears she never will: that's her torment.

Claud. 'Tis true, indeed; so your daughter says:

fection) is past the infinite of thought.' Here are no abrupt stops, or imperfect sentences. *Infinite* may well enough stand; it is used by more careful writers for *indefinite:* and the speaker only means, that *thought*, though in itself *unbounded*, cannot reach or estimate the degree of her passion. Johnson.

The meaning, I think, is,—'but with what an enraged affection she loves him, it is beyond the power of thought to conceive.'

Malone.

Shakspeare has a similar expression in King John:

"Beyond the *infinite* and boundless reach
"Of mercy—." Steevens.

Shall I, says she, *that have so oft encountered him with scorn, write to him that I love him?*

LEON. This says she now when she is beginning to write to him: for she'll be up twenty times a night; and there will she sit in her smock, till she have writ a sheet of paper [2]:—my daughter tells us all.

CLAUD. Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

[2] This says she now when she is beginning to write to him: for she'll be up twenty times a night; and there will she sit in her smock, till she have writ a sheet of paper:] Shakspeare has more than once availed himself of such incidents as occurred to him from history, &c. to compliment the princes before whom his pieces were performed. A striking instance of flattery to James occurs in Macbeth; perhaps the passage here quoted was not less grateful to Elizabeth, as it apparently alludes to an extraordinary trait in one of the letters pretended to have been written by the hated Mary to Bothwell:

"I am *nakit*, and ganging to sleep, and zit I cease not to scribble all this paper, in so meikle as rest is thairof." That is, 'I am naked, and going to sleep, and yet I cease not to scribble to the end of my paper, much as there remains of it unwritten on.

HENLEY.

Mr. Henley's observation must fall to the ground; the word in every edition of Mary's letter which Shakspeare could possibly have seen, being *irkit*, not *nakit*. The French version (as Mr. Whitaker observes in his Vindication of this unfortunate princess, 2d edit. vol. i. p. 522, &c.) "we know to talk egregious nonsense at times.—It even mistakes *irkit* for *nakit;* strips the delicate Queen in the month of January, and at the hour of midnight; and keeps her in this situation '*toute* nuë,' without even the cover of a smock upon her, writing a long letter to her lover." *Irkit*, Scotch, is likewise rendered "nudatæ," by the Latin translator.

"I am *irkit*," means, I am *vexed*, *uneasy*. So, in Sir Philip Sidney's Astrophel and Stella:

"And is even *irkt* that so sweete comedie
"By such unsuted speech should hindred be."

Again, in As You Like It:

"And yet it *irks* me, the poor dappled fools," &c.

Again, in King Henry VI.:

"It *irks* his heart he cannot be reveng'd." STEEVENS.

Leon. O!—When she had writ it, and was reading it over, she found Benedick and Beatrice between the sheet?—

Claud. That.

Leon. O! she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence [3]; railed at herself, that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would flout her: *I measure him*, says she, *by my own spirit; for I should flout him, if he writ to me; yea, though I love him, I should.*

Claud. Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, curses;—*O sweet Benedick! God give me patience!*

Leon. She doth indeed; my daughter says so: and the ecstasy [4] hath so much overborne her, that my daughter is sometime afraid she will do a desperate outrage to herself; It is very true.

D. Pedro. It were good, that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it.

Claud. To what end? He would but make a sport of it, and torment the poor lady worse.

D. Pedro. An he should, it were an alms to hang him: She's an excellent sweet lady; and, out of all suspicion, she is virtuous.

[3] O! she tore the letter into a thousand HALFPENCE;] i. e. into a thousand pieces of the same bigness. So, in As You Like It:

"——they were all *like one another*, as *halfpence are*."

THEOBALD.

A *farthing*, and perhaps a *halfpenny*, was used to signify any small particle or division. So, in the character of the Prioress in Chaucer:

"That in hirre cuppe was no *ferthing* sene
"Of grese, whan she dronken hadde hire draught."

Prol. to the Cant. Tales, Tyrwhitt's edit. v. 135.

STEEVENS.

[4] —and the ECSTASY—] i. e. alienation of mind. So, in The Tempest, Act III. Sc. III.: "Hinder them from what this *ecstasy* may now provoke them to." STEEVENS.

CLAUD. And she is exceeding wise.

D. PEDRO. In every thing, but in loving Benedick.

LEON. O my lord, wisdom and blood[5] combating in so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one, that blood hath the victory. I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being her uncle and her guardian.

D. PEDRO. I would, she had bestowed this dotage on me; I would have daff'd[6] all other respects, and made her half myself: I pray you, tell Benedick of it, and hear what he will say.

LEON. Were it good, think you?

CLAUD. Hero thinks surely, she will die: for she says, she will die if he love her not; and she will die ere she makes her love known; and she will die if he woo her, rather than she will 'bate one breath of her accustomed crossness.

D. PEDRO. She doth well: if she should make tender of her love, 'tis very possible he'll scorn it; for the man, as you know all, hath a contemptible spirit[7].

5 — and BLOOD —] I suppose *blood*, in this instance, to mean *nature*, or *disposition*. So, in the Yorkshire Tragedy:

"For 'tis our *blood* to love what we're forbidden."

See p. 41, n. 1. STEEVENS.

Blood is here, as in many other places, used by our author in the sense of *passion*, or rather *temperament of body*. MALONE.

6 — have DAFF'D —] To *daff* is the same as to *doff*, to *do off*, to *put aside*. So, in Macbeth:

"—— to *doff* their dire distresses." STEEVENS.

7 —— CONTEMPTIBLE spirit.] That is, a temper inclined to scorn and contempt. It has been before remarked, that our author uses his verbal adjectives with great licence. There is therefore no need of changing the word with Sir Thomas Hanmer to *contemptuous*. JOHNSON.

In the argument to Darius, a tragedy, by Lord Sterline, 1603, it is said, that Darius wrote to Alexander "in a proud and *contemptible* manner." In this place *contemptible* certainly means *contemptuous*.

Claud. He is a very proper man [8].

D. Pedro. He hath, indeed, a good outward happiness.

Claud. 'Fore God, and in my mind, very wise.

D. Pedro. He doth, indeed, show some sparks that are like wit.

Leon. And I take him to be valiant.

D. Pedro. As Hector, I assure you: and in the managing of quarrels you may say he is wise; for either he avoids them with great discretion, or undertakes them with a most christian-like fear.

Leon. If he do fear God, he must necessarily keep peace; if he break the peace, he ought to enter into a quarrel with fear and trembling.

D. Pedro. And so will he do; for the man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him, by some large jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece: Shall we go see Benedick, and tell him of her love?

Claud. Never tell him, my lord; let her wear it out with good counsel.

Leon. Nay, that's impossible; she may wear her heart out first.

D. Pedro. Well, we will hear further of it by your daughter; let it cool the while. I love Benedick well; and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy to have so good a lady [9].

Again, Drayton, in the 24th Song of his Polyolbion, speaking in praise of a hermit, says, that he —

"The mad tumultuous world *contemptibly* forsook,
"And to his quiet cell by Crowland him betook."

Steevens.

[8] — a very PROPER MAN.] i. e. a very handsome one. So, in Othello:

"This Ludovico is a *proper man*." Steevens.

[9] — unworthy so good a lady.] Thus the quarto 1600. The first folio unnecessarily reads—"unworthy *to have* so good a lady."

Steevens.

Leon. My lord, will you walk? dinner is ready.

Claud. If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation. [*Aside.*

D. Pedro. Let there be the same net spread for her; and that must your daughter and her gentlewoman carry. The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's dotage, and no such matter; that's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a dumb show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner. [*Aside.*

[*Exeunt Don Pedro, Claudio, and Leonato.*

Benedick advances from the Arbour.

Bene. This can be no trick: The conference was sadly borne [1].—They have the truth of this from Hero. They seem to pity the lady; it seems, her affections have their full bent [2]. Love me! why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured: they say, I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her; they say too, that she will rather die than give any sign of affection.—I did never think to marry:—I must not seem proud:—Happy are they that hear their detractions, and can put them to mending. They say, the lady is fair; 'tis a truth, I can bear them witness: and virtuous; 'tis so, I cannot reprove it; and wise, but for loving me: By my troth, it is no addition to her wit; nor no great argument of her folly,

[1] — was sadly borne.] i. e. was seriously carried on. Steevens.

[2] — have their FULL BENT.] A metaphor from archery. So, in Hamlet:

"They fool me to the top of my *bent*." Malone.

So, again, in Hamlet:

"And here give up ourselves in the *full bent*,
"To lay our service freely at your feet."

The first folio reads—"*the* full bent." I have followed the quarto 1600. Steevens.

for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have railed so long against marriage: But doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth, that he cannot endure in his age: Shall quips, and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain, awe a man from the career of his humour? No, the world must be peopled. When I said, I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married.—Here comes Beatrice: By this day, she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.

Enter BEATRICE.

BEAT. Against my will, I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

BENE. Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

BEAT. I took no more pains for those thanks, than you take pains to thank me; if it had been painful, I would not have come.

BENE. You take pleasure then in the message?

BEAT. Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point, and choke a daw withal:—You have no stomach, signior; fare you well. [*Exit.*

BENE. Ha! *Against my will I am sent to bid you come to dinner*—there's a double meaning in that. *I took no more pains for those thanks, than you took pains to thank me*—that's as much as to say, Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks:—If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew: I will go get her picture. [*Exit.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

LEONATO'S Garden.

Enter HERO, MARGARET, *and* URSULA.

HERO. Good Margaret, run thee to the parlour;
There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice
Proposing with the Prince and Claudio [3]:
Whisper her ear, and tell her, I and Ursula
Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse
Is all of her; say, that thou overheard'st us;
And bid her steal into the pleached bower,
Where honey-suckles, ripen'd by the sun,
Forbid the sun to enter;—like favourites,
Made proud by princes, that advance their pride
Against that power that bred it:—there will she hide her,
To listen our propose [4]: This is thy office;
Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.

MARG. I'll make her come, I warrant you, presently. [*Exit.*

HERO. Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come,
As we do trace this alley up and down,
Our talk must only be of Benedick:
When I do name him, let it be thy part

[3] PROPOSING with the Prince and Claudio:] *Proposing* is *conversing*, from the French word—*propos*, discourse, talk. STEEVENS.

[4] — our PROPOSE:] Thus the quarto. The folio reads—"our *purpose*." *Propose* is right. See the preceding note. STEEVENS.

Purpose, however, may be equally right. It depends only on the manner of accenting the word, which, in Shakspeare's time, was often used in the same sense as *propose*. Thus, in Knox's History of the Reformation in Scotland, p. 72: "— with him six persons; and getting entrie, held *purpose* with the porter." Again, p. 54: "After supper he held comfortable *purpose* of God's chosen children." REED.

To praise him more than ever man did merit:
My talk to thee must be, how Benedick
Is sick in love with Beatrice: Of this matter
Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
That only wounds by hearsay. Now begin;

Enter BEATRICE, *behind.*

For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs
Close by the ground, to hear our conference.
URS. The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
Cut with her golden oars the silver stream,
And greedily devour the treacherous bait:
So angle we for Beatrice; who even now
Is couched in the woodbine coverture:
Fear you not my part of the dialogue.
HERO. Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it.—
[*They advance to the bower.*
No, truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful;
I know, her spirits are as coy and wild
As haggards of the rock[5].
URS. But are you sure
That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely?
HERO. So says the prince, and my new-trothed lord.
URS. And did they bid her tell you of it, madam?

[5] As HAGGARDS of the rock.] Turberville, in his book of Falconry, 1575, tells us, that "the *haggard* doth come from foreign parts a stranger and a passenger;" and Latham, who wrote after him, says, that, "she keeps in subjection the most part of all the fowl that fly, insomuch, that the tassel gentle, her natural and chiefest companion, dares not come near that coast where she useth, nor sit by the place where she standeth. Such is the greatness of her spirit, *she will not admit of any society*, until such a time as nature worketh," &c. So, in The Tragical History of Didaco and Violenta, 1576:

"Perchaunce she's not of *haggard's* kind,
"Nor heart so hard to bend," &c. STEEVENS.

Hero. They did intreat me to acquaint her of it:
But I persuaded them, if they lov'd Benedick,
To wish him [6] wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

Urs. Why did you so? Doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full, as fortunate a bed [7],
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?

Hero. O God of love! I know, he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man:
But nature never fram'd a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice:
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprising [8] what they look on; and her wit
Values itself so highly, that to her
All matter else seems weak [9]: she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection,
She is so self-endeared.

Urs. Sure, I think so;
And therefore, certainly, it were not good
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

[6] To WISH him —] i. e. recommend or desire. So, in The Honest Whore, 1604:

"Go *wish* the surgeon to have great respect," &c.

Again, in The Hog hath Lost his Pearl, 1614: "But lady mine that shall be, your father, hath *wish'd* me to appoint the day with you." REED.

[7] — as FULL, &c.] So, in Othello:

"What a *full* fortune doth the thick-lips owe?" &c.

Mr. M. Mason very justly observes, that what Ursula means to say is, "that he is as deserving of complete happiness in the marriage state, as Beatrice herself." STEEVENS.

[8] Misprising —] Despising, contemning. JOHNSON.

To *misprise* is to *undervalue*, or *take in a wrong light*. So, in Troilus and Cressida:

"—— a great deal *misprising*
"The knight oppos'd." STEEVENS.

[9] —— that to her
All matter else SEEMS WEAK;] So, in Love's Labour's Lost:

"—— to your huge store
"Wise things *seem foolish*, and rich things but poor."
STEEVENS.

Hero. Why, you speak truth: I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featur'd,
But she would spell him backward [1]: if fair-faced,
She'd swear, the gentleman should be her sister;
If black, why, nature, drawing of an antick,
Made a foul blot [2]: if tall, a lance ill-headed;

[1] — spell him BACKWARD:] Alluding to the practice of witches in uttering prayers.

The following passages containing a similar train of thought, are from Lyly's Anatomy of Wit, 1581:

"If one be hard in conceiving, they pronounce him a dowlte: if given to study, they proclaim him a dunce: if merry, a jester: if sad, a saint: if full of words, a sot: if without speech, a cypher: if one argue with him boldly, then is he impudent: if coldly, an innocent: if there be reasoning of divinitie, they cry, *Quæ supra nos, nihil ad nos:* if of humanite, *sententias loquitur carnifex.*"

Again, p. 44, b: "—— if he be cleanly, they [women] term him proude: if meene in apparel, a sloven: if tall, a lungis: if short, a dwarf: if bold, blunt: if shamefast, a cowarde," &c. P. 55: "If she be well set, then call her a bosse: if slender, a hasill twig: if nut brown, black as a coal: if well colour'd, a painted wall: if she be pleasant, then is she wanton: if sullen, a clowne: if honest, then is she coye." STEEVENS.

[2] If BLACK, why, nature, drawing of an ANTICK,
Made a foul blot:] The *antick* was a buffoon character in the old English farces, with a *blacked face*, and a *patch-work habit*. What I would observe from hence is, that the name of *antick* or *antique*, given to this character, shows that the people had some traditional ideas of its being borrowed from the *ancient mimes*, who are thus described by Apuleius: "*mimi centunculo, fuligine faciem obducti.*" WARBURTON.

I believe what is here said of the old English farces, is said at random. Dr. Warburton was thinking, I imagine, of the modern Harlequin. I have met with no proof that the face of the antick or Vice of the old English comedy was blackened. By the word *black* in the text, is only meant, as I conceive, *swarthy*, or *dark brown*. MALONE.

A *black man* means a man with a dark or thick beard, not a swarthy or dark-brown complexion, as Mr. Malone conceives. DOUCE.

When Hero says, that—"nature, *drawing* of an *antick*, made a foul *blot*," she only alludes to *a drop of ink* that may casually fall out of a pen, and spoil a *grotesque drawing*. STEEVENS.

If low, an agate very vilely cut [3]:
If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds [4];

[3] If low, an AGATE very vilely cut :] But why an *agate*, if low? For what likeness between a *little man* and an *agate?* The ancients, indeed, used this stone to cut upon; but very exquisitely. I make no question but the poet wrote:

'—— an *aglet* very vilely cut:'

An *aglet* was a tag of those points, formerly so much in fashion. These tags were either of gold, silver, or brass, according to the quality of the wearer; and were commonly in the shape of little images; or at least had a head cut at the extremity. The French call them, *aiguillettes*. Mezeray, speaking of Henry the Third's sorrow for the death of the princess of Conti, says, "— portant meme sur les *aiguillettes* des petites tetes de mort." And as a *tall man* is before compared to a *lance ill-headed;* so, by the same figure, a *little man* is very aptly liken'd to an *aglet ill-cut*.
WARBURTON.

The old reading is, I believe, the true one. *Vilely cut* may not only mean aukwardly cut by a tool into shape, but grotesquely veined by nature as it grew. To this circumstance, I suppose, Drayton alludes in his Muses' Elizium:

"With th' *agate*, very oft that is
"*Cut strangely* in the quarry;
"As nature meant to show in this
"How she herself can vary."

Pliny mentions that the shapes of various beings are to be discovered in *agates;* and Mr. Addison has very elegantly compared Shakspeare, who was born with all the seeds of poetry, to the *agate* in the ring of Pyrrhus, which, as Pliny tells us, had the figure of Apollo and the nine Muses in the veins of it, produced by the spontaneous hand of nature, without any help from art. STEEVENS.

Dr. Warburton reads *aglet*, which was adopted, I think, too hastily by the subsequent editors. I see no reason for departing from the old copy. Shakspeare's comparisons scarcely ever answer completely on both sides. Dr. Warburton asks, "What likeness is there between a *little man* and an *agate?*" No other than that both are *small*. Our author has himself, in another place, compared a *very little man* to an *agate*. "Thou whorson mandrake, (says Falstaff to his *page*) thou art fitter to be worn in my cap, than to wait at my heels. I was never so *man'd* with an *agate* till now." Hero means no more than this: 'If a man be low, Beatrice will say that he is as diminutive and unhappily formed as an ill-cut agate.'

It appears both from the passage just quoted, and from one of

If silent, why, a block moved with none.
So turns she every man the wrong side out;
And never gives to truth and virtue, that
Which simpleness and merit purchaseth.

Urs. Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

Hero. No: not to be so odd[5], and from all fashions,

As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable:
But who dare tell her so? If I should speak,
She'd mock me into air; O, she would laugh me
Out of myself, press me to death with wit[6].

Sir John Harrington's epigrams, 4to. 1618, that *agates* were commonly worn in Shakspeare's time:

THE AUTHOR TO A DAUGHTER NINE YEARS OLD.

"Though pride in damsels is a hateful vice,
"Yet could I like a noble-minded girl,
"That would demand me things of costly price,
"Rich velvet gowns, pendents, and chains of pearle,
"Cark'nets of *agats*, *cut* with *rare device*," &c.

These lines, at the same time that they add support to the old reading, show, I think, that the words "*vilely cut*," are to be understood in their usual sense, when applied to precious stones, viz. *awkwardly wrought by a tool*, and not, as Mr. Steevens supposes, *grotesquely veined* by nature. Malone.

[4] — a vane blown with all winds;] This comparison might have been borrowed from an ancient black-letter ballad, entitled A Comparison of the Life of Man:

"I may compare a *man* againe,
"Even like unto a *twining vane*,
"That changeth even as doth the wind;
"Indeed so is man's fickle mind." Steevens.

[5] No: NOT to be so odd, &c.] I should read—'*nor* to be so odd,' &c. M. Mason.

[6] — press me to death —] The allusion is to an ancient punishment of our law, called *peine fort et dure*, which was formerly inflicted on those persons, who, being indicted, refused to plead. In consequence of their silence, they were pressed to death by an heavy weight laid upon their stomach. This punishment the good sense and humanity of the legislature have within these few years abolished. Malone.

Therefore let Benedick, like cover'd fire,
Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly:
It were a better death than die * with mocks;
Which is as bad as die with tickling [7].

URS. Yet tell her of it; hear what she will say.

HERO. No; rather I will go to Benedick,
And counsel him to fight against his passion:
And, truly, I'll devise some honest slanders
To stain my cousin with: One doth not know,
How much an ill word may empoison liking.

URS. O, do not do your cousin such a wrong.
She cannot be so much without true judgment,
(Having so swift and excellent a wit [8],
As she is priz'd to have,) as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as signior Benedick.

HERO. He is the only man of Italy,
Always excepted my dear Claudio.

URS. I pray you, be not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my fancy; signior Benedick,
For shape, for bearing, argument [9], and valour,
Goes foremost in report through Italy.

HERO. Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.

URS. His excellence did earn it, ere he had it.—
When are you married, madam?

* First folio, *to die*.

[7] Which is as bad as die with TICKLING.] The author meant that *tickling* should be pronounced as a trisyllable; *tickeling*. So, in Spenser, b. ii. canto xii.:

"—— a strange kind of harmony;
"Which Guyon's senses softly *tickeled*," &c. MALONE.

[8] — so SWIFT and excellent a wit,] *Swift* means *ready*. So, in As You Like It, Act V. Sc. IV.:

"He is very *swift* and sententious." STEEVENS.

[9] — argument,] This word seems here to signify *discourse*, or, the *powers of reasoning*. JOHNSON.

Argument, in the present instance, certainly means *conversation*. So, in King Henry IV. P. I.: "It would be *argument* for a week, laughter for a month, and a good jest for ever."
STEEVENS.

Hero. Why, every day;—to-morrow: Come, go in;
I'll show thee some attires; and have thy counsel,
Which is the best to furnish me to-morrow.

Urs. She's limed [1], I warrant you; we have caught her, madam.

Hero. If it prove so, then loving goes by haps:
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.

[*Exeunt Hero and Ursula.*

Beatrice advances.

Beat. What fire is in mine ears [2]? Can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?

[1] She's LIM'D —] She is ensnared and entangled as a sparrow with *birdlime*. JOHNSON.

So, in The Spanish Tragedy:

"Which sweet conceits are *lim'd* with sly deceits."

The folio reads—"She's *ta'en*." STEEVENS.

[2] What fire is in mine ears?] Alluding to a proverbial saying of the common people, that their ears burn, when others are talking of them. WARBURTON.

The opinion from whence this proverbial saying is derived, is of great antiquity, being thus mentioned by Pliny: "Moreover is not this an opinion generally received, That when our *ears do glow and tingle*, some there be that in our absence doe talke of us?" *Philemon Holland's translation*, b. xxviii. p. 297, and *Brown's Vulgar Errors*. REED.

Thus, in The Castell of Courtesie, whereunto is adioyned The Holde of Humilitie, &c. &c. By James Yates Seruingman, 4to. 1582, p. 73:

"Of the *burning of the eares*.

"That I doe credite giue
"vnto the saying old,
"Which is, *when as the eares doe burne*,
"*some thing on thee is told*."

Chapman has transplanted this vulgarism into his version of the 22d Iliad:

"—— Now *burnes* my ominous *eare*
"*With whispering*, Hector's selfe conceit hath cast away his host." STEEVENS.

Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!
No glory lives behind the back of such.
And, Benedick, love on, I will requite thee;
Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand [3];
If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee
To bind our loves up in a holy band:
For others say, thou dost deserve; and I
Believe it better than reportingly. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A Room in LEONATO's House.

Enter Don PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, and LEONATO.

D. PEDRO. I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then I go toward Arragon.

CLAUD. I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me.

D. PEDRO. Nay, that would be as great a soil in the new gloss of your marriage, as to show a child his new coat, and forbid him to wear it [4]. I will only be bold with Benedick for his company; for, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth; he hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow-string, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him [5]: he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and

[3] Taming my WILD heart to thy loving hand;] This image is taken from falconry. She had been charged with being as wild as *haggards of the rock;* she therefore says, that *wild* as her *heart* is, she will *tame* it *to the hand.* JOHNSON.

[4] — as to show a child his new coat, and forbid him to wear it.] So, in Romeo and Juliet:

" As is the night before some festival,
" To an impatient child, that hath new robes,
" And may not wear them." STEEVENS.

[5] — the little HANGMAN dare not shoot at him:] This character of Cupid came from the Arcadia of Sir Philip Sidney:

his tongue is the clapper; for what his heart thinks, his tongue speaks [6].

Bene. Gallants, I am not as I have been.

Leon. So say I; methinks, you are sadder.

Claud. I hope, he be in love.

D. Pedro. Hang him, truant; there's no true drop of blood in him, to be truly touch'd with love: if he be sad, he wants money.

Bene. I have the tooth-ache [7].

D. Pedro. Draw it.

Bene. Hang it!

Claud. You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards [8].

D. Pedro. What? sigh for the tooth-ache?

Leon. Where is but a humour, or a worm?

Bene. Well, every one can master a grief [9], but he that has it.

Claud. Yet say I, he is in love.

D. Pedro. There is no appearance of fancy in him, unless it be a fancy that he hath to strange dis-

"Millions of yeares this old drivell Cupid lives;
"While still more wretch, more wicked he doth prove:
"Till now at length that Jove him office gives,
"(At Juno's suite, who much did Argus love,)
"In this our world a *hangman* for to be
"Of all those fooles that will have all they see."
B. II. ch. xiv. Farmer.

6 —as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper; &c.] A covert allusion to the old proverb:
"As the fool thinketh,
"So the bell clinketh." Steevens.

7 I have the tooth-ache.] So, in the False One, by Beaumont and Fletcher:
"O this sounds mangily,
"Poorly, and scurvily, in a soldier's mouth;
"You had best be troubled with the tooth-ache too,
"*For lovers ever are.*" Boswell.

8 You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.] Alluding probably to the method sometimes practised, of drawing teeth by means of a waxed string. Talbot.

9 —can master a grief,] The old copies read corruptly—*cannot*. The correction was made by Mr. Pope. Malone.

guises [1]; as, to be a Dutch-man to-day; a French-man to-morrow; or in the shape of two countries at once [2], as, a German from the waist downward, all slops [3]; and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet [4]: Unless he have a fancy to this foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no fool for fancy, as you would have it appear he is [5].

[1] There is no appearance of FANCY, &c.] Here is a play upon the word *fancy*, which Shakspeare uses for *love*, as well as for *humour*, *caprice*, or *affectation*. JOHNSON.

[2] —or in the shape of two countries at once, &c.] So, in The Seven deadly Sinnes of London, by Tho. Decker, 1606, bl. l.: "For an Englishman's sute is like a traitor's bodie that hath been hanged, drawne, and quartered, and is set up in severall places: his codpiece is in Denmarke; the collor of his dublet and the belly, in France: the wing and narrow sleeve, in Italy: the short waste hangs ouer a Dutch botcher's stall in Utrich: his huge sloppes speaks Spanish: Polonia gives him the bootes, &c.—and thus we mocke euerie nation, for keeping one fashion, yet steale patches from euerie one of them, to peece out our pride; and are now laughing-stocks to them, because their cut so scurvily becomes us." STEEVENS.

[3] —all SLOPS;] *Slops* are large loose *breeches*, or *trowsers*, worn only by sailors at present. They are mentioned by Jonson, in his Alchymist:

"——six great *slops*
"Bigger than three Dutch hoys."

Again, in Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks, 1611:

"——three pounds in gold
"These *slops* contain." STEEVENS.

Hence evidently the term *slop-seller*, for the venders of ready made clothes. NICHOLS.

See vol. iv. p. 367, n. 4; also, vol. vi. p. 101, n. 9. WOODHAM.

[4] —a Spaniard from the hip upward, NO doublet:] There can be no doubt but we should read, *all* doublet, which corresponds with the actual dress of the old Spaniards. As the passage now stands, it is a negative description, which is in truth no description at all. M. MASON.

"—no doublet:" or, in other words, all cloak. The words—"Or in the shape of two countries," &c. to "no doublet," were omitted in the folio, probably to avoid giving any offence to the Spaniards, with whom James became a friend in 1604. MALONE.

[5] —have it appear he is.] Thus the quarto 1600. The folio 1623 reads—"have it *to* appear," &c. STEEVENS.

Claud. If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing old signs: he brushes his hat o' mornings: What should that bode?

D. Pedro. Hath any man seen him at the barber's?

Claud. No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him; and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuffed tennis-balls [4].

Leon. Indeed, he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard.

D. Pedro. Nay, he rubs himself with civet: Can you smell him out by that?

Claud. That's as much as to say, The sweet youth's in love.

D. Pedro. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

Claud. And when was he wont to wash his face?

D. Pedro. Yea, or to paint himself? for the which, I hear what they say of him.

Claud. Nay, but his jesting spirit; which is now crept into a lutestring [5], and now governed by stops.

D. Pedro. Indeed, that tells a heavy tale for him: Conclude, conclude, he is in love.

Claud. Nay, but I know who loves him.

[4] — and the old ornament of his cheek hath already STUFFED TENNIS-BALLS.] So, in A Wonderful, Strange, and Miraculous Astrological Prognostication for this Year of our Lord, 1591, written by Nashe, in ridicule of Richard Harvey: "— they may sell their haire by the pound, to *stuffe tennice balles*." STEEVENS.

Again, in Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks, 1611:

"Thy *beard* shall serve to *stuff* those *balls* by which I get me heat at *tenice*."

Again, in The Gentle Craft, 1600:

"He'll shave it off, and *stuffe tenice balls* with it."

HENDERSON.

[5] — crept into a LUTESTRING,] *Love-songs* in our author's time were generally sung to the musick of the lute. So, in King Henry IV. P. I.:

"—— as melancholy as an old lion, or a *lover's lute*."

MALONE.

D. Pedro. That would I know too; I warrant, one that knows him not.

Claud. Yes, and his ill conditions; and, in despite of all, dies for him.

D. Pedro. She shall be buried with her face upwards [6].

[6] She shall be buried with her FACE UPWARDS.] Thus the whole set of editions: but what is there any way particular in this? Are not all men and women buried so? Sure, the poet means, in opposition to the general rule, and by way of distinction, with her *heels* udwards, or, face *downwards*. I have chosen the first reading, because I find it the expression in vogue in our author's time.

THEOBALD.

This emendation, which appears to me very specious, is rejected by Dr. Warburton. The meaning seems to be, that she who acted upon principles contrary to others, should be buried with the same contrariety. JOHNSON.

Mr. Theobald quite mistakes the scope of the poet, who prepares the reader to expect somewhat uncommon or extraordinary; and the humour consists in the disappointment of that expectation, as at the end of Iago's poetry in Othello:

" She was a wight, (if ever such wight were)—
" To suckle fools, and chronicle small beer." HEATH.

Theobald's conjecture may, however, be supported by a passage in The Wild Goose Chase of Beaumont and Fletcher:

" —— love cannot starve me;
" For if I die o' th' first fit, I am unhappy,
" And worthy to be *buried with my heels upwards*."

Dr. Johnson's explanation may likewise be countenanced by a passage in an old black letter book, without date, intitled, A Merye Jest of a Man that was called *Howleglas*, &c. " How *Howleglas* was buried."—" Thus as *Howleglas* was deade, then they brought him to be buryed. And as they would have put the coffyn into the pytte with II cordes, the corde at the fete brake, so that the fote of the coffyn fell into the botome of the pyt, and the coffyn stood bolt upryght in the middes of the grave. Then desired the people that stode about the grave that tyme, to let the coffyn to stand bolt upryght. For in his lyfe tyme he was a very marvelous man, &c. and shall be buryed as marvailously; and in this maner they left *Howleglass*," &c.

That this book was once popular, may be inferred from Ben Jonson's frequent allusions to it in his Poetaster:

" What do you laugh, *Owleglas?*"

Again, in The Fortunate Isles, a masque:

" What do you think of *Owlglas*,
" Instead of him?"

Bene. Yet is this no charm for the tooth-ach.—Old signior, walk aside with me; I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these hobby-horses must not hear.

[*Exeunt Benedick and Leonato.*

D. Pedro. For my life, to break with him about Beatrice.

Claud. 'Tis even so: Hero and Margaret have by this played their parts with Beatrice; and then the two bears will not bite one another, when they meet.

Enter Don John.

D. John. My lord and brother, God save you.

D. Pedro. Good den, brother.

D. John. If your leisure served, I would speak with you.

D. Pedro. In private?

And again, in The Sad Shepherd. This history was originally written in Dutch. The hero is there called *Uyle-spegel.* Under this title he is likewise introduced by Ben Jonson in his Alchymist, and the masque and pastoral already quoted. Menage speaks of *Ulespeigle* as a man famous for *tromperies ingenieuses;* adds that his Life was translated into French, and quotes the title-page of it. I have another copy published A Troyes, in 1714, the title of which differs from that set down by Menage.

The passage indeed may mean only—'She shall be buried in her lover's arms.' So, in The Winter's Tale:

"*Flo.* What? like a corse?

"*Per.* No, like a bank for love to lie and play on;

"Not like a corse:——or if,—not to be *buried,*

"But quick and in my arms."

On the whole, however, I prefer Mr. Theobald's conjecture to my own explanation. Steevens.

The interpretation suggested by Mr. Steevens himself, is, I believe, the true one. *Heels* and *face* never could have been confounded by either the eye or the ear.

Besides; Don Pedro is evidently playing on the word *dies* in Claudio's speech, which Claudio uses metaphorically, and of which Don Pedro avails himself to introduce an allusion to that consummation which he supposes Beatrice was *dying* for.

Malone.

D. John. If it please you;—yet count Claudio may hear; for what I would speak of, concerns him.

D. Pedro. What's the matter?

D. John. Means your lordship to be married to-morrow? [*To Claudio.*

D. Pedro. You know, he does.

D. John. I know not that, when he knows what I know.

Claud. If there be any impediment, I pray you, discover it.

D. John. You may think, I love you not; let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest: For my brother, I think, he holds you well; and in dearness of heart hath holp to effect your ensuing marriage: surely, suit ill spent, and labour ill bestowed!

D. Pedro. Why, what's the matter?

D. John. I came hither to tell you; and, circumstances shortened, (for she hath been too long a talking of,) the lady is disloyal.

Claud. Who? Hero?

D. John. Even she; Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero [7].

Claud. Disloyal?

D. John. The word is too good to paint out her wickedness; I could say, she were worse; think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to-night, you shall see her chamber-window entered; even the night before her wedding-day: if you love her then, to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

Claud. May this be so?

7 Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero.] Dryden has transplanted this sarcasm into his All for Love:

"Your Cleopatra; Dolabella's Cleopatra; every man's Cleopatra." Steevens.

D. Pedro. I will not think it.

D. John. If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know: if you will follow me, I will show you enough; and when you have seen more, and heard more, proceed accordingly.

Claud. If I see any thing to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow; in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

D. Pedro. And, as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her.

D. John. I will disparage her no farther, till you are my witnesses: bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

D. Pedro. O day untowardly turned!

Claud. O mischief strangely thwarting!

D. John. O plague right well prevented!

So will you say, when you have seen the sequel.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A Street.

Enter Dogberry *and* Verges[8], *with the Watch.*

Dogb. Are you good men and true?

Verg. Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation, body and soul.

Dogb. Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the prince's watch.

Verg. Well, give them their charge[9], neighbour Dogberry.

8 — Dogberry *and* Verges,] The first of these worthies had his name from the *Dog-berry*, i. e. the female cornel, a shrub that grows in the hedges in every county of England.

Verges is only the provincial pronunciation of *Verjuice*. Rob. 151

Steevens.

9 Well, give them their charge,] To *charge* his fellows, seems

Dogb. First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable?

1 *Watch.* Hugh Oatcake, sir, or George Seacoal; for they can write and read.

Dogb. Come hither, neighbour Seacoal: God hath blessed you with a good name: to be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune; but to write and read comes by nature.

2 *Watch.* Both which, master constable,——

Dogb. You have; I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it; and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lantern: This is your charge; You shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name.

2 *Watch.* How if he will not stand?

Dogb. Why then, take no note of him, but let him go; and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

Verg. If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects.

Dogb. True, and they are to meddle with none but the prince's subjects:—You shall also make no noise in the streets; for, for the watch to babble and talk, is most tolerable and not to be endured.

2 *Watch.* We will rather sleep than talk; we know what belongs to a watch.

Dogb. Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman; for I cannot see how sleeping

to have been a regular part of the duty of the constable of the watch. So, in A New Trick to Cheat the Devil, 1639: "My watch is set—*charge given*—and all at peace." Again, in The Insatiate Countess, by Marston, 1613: "Come on, my hearts; we are the city's security—I'll give you your *charge*." Malone.

should offend: only, have a care that your bills be not stolen [1].—Well, you are to call at all the ale-

[1] — BILLS be not stolen:] A *bill* is still carried by the watchmen at Lichfield. It was the old weapon of English infantry, which, says Temple, *gave the most ghastly and deplorable wounds.* It may be called *securis falcata.* JOHNSON.

About Shakspeare's time *halberds* were the weapons borne by the watchmen, as appears from Blount's Voyage to the Levant: "— certaine Janizaries, who with great staves guard each street, as our night watchmen with *holberds* in London." REED.

The weapons to which the care of Dogberry extends, are mentioned in Glapthorne's Wit in a Constable, 1639:

"—— Well said, neighbours;
"You're chatting wisely o'er your *bills* and lanthorns,
"As becomes watchmen of discretion."

Again, in Arden of Feversham, 1592:

"—————— the watch
"Are coming tow'rd our house with glaives and *bills*."

The following representation of a *watchman*, with his *bill* on his shoulder, is copied from the title-page to Decker's O per se O, &c. 4to. 1612:

STEEVENS.

houses, and bid those that are drunk [2] get them to bed.

2 *Watch.* How if they will not?

Dogb. Why then, let them alone till they are sober; if they make you not then the better answer, you may say, they are not the men you took them for.

2 *Watch.* Well, sir.

Dogb. If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man: and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.

2 *Watch.* If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

Dogb. Truly, by your office, you may; but, I think, they that touch pitch will be defiled: the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is, to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company.

Verg. You have been always called a merciful man, partner.

Dogb. Truly, I would not hang a dog by my will; much more a man who hath any honesty in him.

Verg. If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse, and bid her still it [3].

[2] —bid THOSE that are drunk —] Thus the quarto 1600. The folio 1623 reads—" bid *them* that," &c. STEEVENS.

[3] If you hear a child cry, &c.] It is not impossible but that part of this scene was intended as a burlesque on The Statutes of the Streets, imprinted by Wolfe, in 1595. Among these I find the following:

22. " No man shall blowe any horne in the night, within this citie, or whistle after the houre of nyne of the clock in the night, under paine of imprisonment.

23. " No man shall use to go with visoures, or disguised by night, under like paine of imprisonment.

24. " Made that night-walkers, and evisdroppers, have like punishment.

2 *Watch.* How if the nurse be asleep, and will not hear us?

Dogb. Why then, depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying: for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes, will never answer a calf when it bleats.

Verg. 'Tis very true.

Dogb. This is the end of the charge. You, constable, are to present the prince's own person; if you meet the prince in the night, you may stay him.

Verg. Nay by'r lady, that, I think, he cannot.

Dogb. Five shillings to one on't, with any man that knows the statues [4], he may stay him: marry,

25. "No hammer-man, as a smith, a pewterer, a founder, and all artificers making great sound, shall not worke after the houre of nyne at night, &c.

30. "No man shall, after the houre of nyne at night, keepe any rule, whereby any such suddaine outcry be made in the still of the night, as making any affray, or beating his wyfe, or servant, or singing, or revyling in his house, to the disturbaunce of his neighbours, under payne of iiis. iiiid." &c. &c.

Ben Jonson, however, appears to have ridiculed this scene in the Induction to his Bartholomew-Fair:

"And then a substantial *watch* to have stole in upon 'em, and taken them away with *mistaking words*, as the fashion is in the stage practice." Steevens.

Mr. Steevens observes, and I believe justly, that Ben Jonson intended to ridicule this scene in his Induction to Bartholomew-Fair; yet in his Tale of a Tub, he makes his wise men of Finsbury speak just in the same style, and blunder in the same manner, without any such intention. M. Mason.

Mistaking words were a source of merriment before Shakspeare's time. Nashe, in his Anatomie of Absurditie, 1589, speaks of a "*misterming* clowne in a comedie;" and in Selimus, Emperor of the Turks, 1594, we have this speech put into the mouth of Bullithrumble, a shepherd: "A good nutrimented lad: well, if you will keepe my sheepe truly and honestly, keeping your *hands from lying and slandering*, and your *tongues from picking and stealing*, you shall be maister Bullithrumble's servitures."

Boswell.

[4] — the statues,] Thus the folio 1623. The quarto 1600

not without the prince be willing: for, indeed, the watch ought to offend no man; and it is an offence to stay a man against his will.

Verg. By'r lady, I think, it be so.

Dogb. Ha, ha, ha! Well, masters, good night: an there be any matter of weight chances, call up me: keep your fellows' counsels and your own [5], and good night. Come, neighbour.

2 *Watch.* Well, masters, we hear our charge: let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to-bed.

Dogb. One word more, honest neighbours: I pray you, watch about signior Leonato's door; for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night: Adieu, be vigitant, I beseech you. [*Exeunt Dogberry and Verges.*

Enter Borachio and Conrade.

Bora. What! Conrade,—

Watch. Peace, stir not. [*Aside.*

Bora. Conrade, I say!

Con. Here, man, I am at thy elbow.

Bora. Mass, and my elbow itched; I thought, there would a scab follow.

Con. I will owe thee an answer for that; and now forward with thy tale.

Bora. Stand thee close then under this penthouse, for it drizzles rain; and I will, like a true drunkard [6], utter all to thee.

reads—"the *statutes*." But whether the blunder was designed by the poet, or created by the printer, must be left to the consideration of our readers. Steevens.

[5] —keep your fellows' counsels and your own,] This is part of the oath of a grand juryman; and is one of many proofs of Shakspeare's having been very conversant, at some period of his life, with legal proceedings and courts of justice. Malone.

[6] —like a true drunkard,] I suppose, it was on this account

Watch. [*Aside.*] Some treason, masters; yet stand close.

Bora. Therefore know, I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats.

Con. Is it possible that any villainy should be so dear?

Bora. Thou should'st rather ask, if it were possible any villainy should be so rich[7]; for when rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.

Con. I wonder at it.

Bora. That shows, thou art unconfirmed[8]: Thou knowest, that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.

Con. Yes, it is apparel.

Bora. I mean, the fashion.

Con. Yes, the fashion is the fashion.

Bora. Tush! I may as well say, the fool's the fool. But seest thou not what a deformed thief this fashion is?

Watch. I know that Deformed; he has been a vile thief this seven year; he goes up and down like a gentleman: I remember his name.

Bora. Didst thou not hear somebody?

Con. No; 'twas the vane on the house.

Bora. Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily he turns about all the hot bloods, between fourteen and five and thirty? sometime, fashioning them like Pharaoh's

that Shakspeare called him *Borachio*, from *Boraccho*, Spanish, a drunkard; or *Borracha*, a leathern receptacle for wine.

STEEVENS.

[7] —any VILLAINY should be so rich;] The sense absolutely requires us to read, *villain*. WARBURTON.

The old reading may stand. STEEVENS.

[8] — thou art UNCONFIRMED:] i. e. unpractised in the ways of the world. WARBURTON.

soldiers in the reechy painting [9]; sometime, like god Bel's priests [1] in the old church window; sometime, like the shaven Hercules [2] in the smirched [3]

[9] —REECHY painting;] Is painting discoloured by smoke. So, in Hans Beer Pot's Invisible Comedy, 1618:

"——he look'd so *reechily*,
"Like bacon hanging on the chimney's roof."

From *recan*, Anglo-Saxon, to *reek*, *fumare*. STEEVENS.

[1] —like god Bel's priests—] Alluding to some awkward representation of the story of Bel and the Dragon, as related in the Apocrypha. STEEVENS.

[2] —sometime, like the SHAVEN HERCULES, &c.] By the *shaven Hercules* is meant *Sampson*, the usual subject of old tapestry. In this ridicule on the fashion, the poet has not unartfully given a stroke at the barbarous workmanship of the common tapestry hangings, then so much in use. The same kind of raillery Cervantes has employed on the like occasion, when he brings his knight and 'squire to an inn, where they found the story of Dido and Æneas represented in bad tapestry. On Sancho's seeing the tears fall from the eyes of the forsaken queen as big as walnuts, he hopes that when their atchievements became the general subject for these sorts of works, that fortune will send them a better artist.—What authorised the poet to give this name to Sampson was the folly of certain Christian mythologists, who pretend that the Grecian Hercules was the Jewish Sampson. The retenue of our author is to be commended: The sober audience of that time would have been offended with the mention of a venerable name on so light an occasion. Shakspeare is indeed sometimes licentious in these matters: But to do him justice, he generally seems to have a sense of religion, and to be under its influence. What Pedro says of Benedick, in this comedy, may be well enough applied to him: "The man doth fear God, however it seems not to be in him by some large jests he will make." WARBURTON.

I believe that Shakspeare knew nothing of these Christian mythologists, and by the *shaven Hercules* meant only *Hercules when shaved to make him look like a woman*, while he remained in the service of Omphale, his Lydian mistress. Had the *shaved Hercules* been meant to represent Sampson, he would probably have been equipped with a *jaw bone* instead of a *club*. STEEVENS.

[3] —smirched—] *Smirched* is *soiled*, *obscured*. So, in As You Like It, Act I. Sc. III.:

"And with a kind of umber *smirch* my face." STEEVENS.

worm-eaten tapestry, where his cod-piece seems as massy as his club?

Con. All this I see; and see, that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man: But art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion?

Bora. Not so neither: but know, that I have to-night wooed Margaret, the lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero; she leans me out at her mistress' chamber-window, bids me a thousand times good night,—I tell this tale vilely:—I should first tell thee, how the Prince, Claudio, and my master, planted, and placed, and possessed by my master Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

Con. And thought they, Margaret was Hero?

Bora. Two of them did, the Prince and Claudio; but the devil my master knew she was Margaret; and partly by his oaths, which first possessed them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villainy, which did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio enraged; swore he would meet her as he was appointed, next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw over-night, and send her home again without a husband.

1 *Watch.* We charge you in the prince's name, stand.

2 *Watch.* Call up the right master constable: We have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.

1 *Watch.* And one Deformed is one of them; I know him, he wears a lock[4]. ×

× Daphney adds a key to it for facetiousness: Ford 1615.

Con. Masters, masters [5].

2 *Watch.* You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.

Con. Masters,—

1 *Watch.* Never speak: we charge you, let us obey you to go with us.

Bora. We are like to prove a goodly commodity, being taken up of these men's bills [6].

Con. A commodity in question [7], I warrant you. Come, we'll obey you. [*Exeunt.*

[4] — wears a LOCK.] So, in The Return from Parnassus, 1606:

"He whose thin fire dwells in a smoky roofe,
"Must take tobacco, and must wear a *lock*."

See Dr. Warburton's note, Act V. Sc. I. STEEVENS.

[5] *Con.* Masters, masters, &c.] In former copies:

"*Con.* Masters.

"2 *Watch.* You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.

"*Con.* Masters, never speak: we charge you, let us obey you to go with us."

The regulation which I have made in this last speech, though against the authority of all the printed copies, I flatter myself, carries its proof with it. Conrade and Borachio are not designed to talk absurd nonsense. It is evident, therefore, that Conrade is attempting his own justification; but is interrupted in it by the impertinence of the men in office. THEOBALD.

[6] —— a goodly COMMODITY, being TAKEN UP of these men's BILLS.] Here is a cluster of conceits. *Commodity* was formerly, as now, the usual term for an article of merchandise. To *take up*, besides its common meaning, (*to apprehend*,) was the phrase for obtaining goods on credit. "If a man is thorough with them in honest *taking up*, (says Falstaff,) then they must stand upon security." *Bill* was the term both for a *single bond* and a *halberd*.

We have the same conceit in King Henry VI. P. II.: "My lord, When shall we go to Cheapside, and *take up commodities* upon our *bills?*" MALONE.

[7] A commodity in QUESTION,] i. e. a commodity subject to judicial trial or examination. Thus Hooker: "Whosoever be found guilty, the communion book hath deserved least to be called in *question* for this fault." STEEVENS.

SCENE IV.

A Room in Leonato's House.

Enter Hero, Margaret, and Ursula.

Hero. Good Ursula, wake my cousin Beatrice, and desire her to rise.

Urs. I will, lady.

Hero. And bid her come hither.

Urs. Well. [*Exit Ursula.*

Marg. Troth, I think, your other rabato [8] were better.

Hero. No, pray thee, good Meg, I'll wear this.

Marg. By my troth, it's not so good: and I warrant, your cousin will say so.

Hero. My cousin's a fool, and thou art another; I'll wear none but this.

Marg. I like the new tire within excellently, if the hair were a thought browner [9]: and your gown's

[8] — rabato —] An ornament for the neck, a collar-band, or kind of ruff. Fr. *Rabat*. Menage saith it comes from *rabattre*, to *put back*, because it was at first nothing but the collar of the shirt or shift turn'd back towards the shoulders. T. Hawkins.

This article of dress is frequently mentioned by our ancient comic writers.

So, in the comedy of Law Tricks, &c. 1608:

"Broke broad jests upon her narrow heel,
"Pok'd her *rabatoes*, and survey'd her *steel*."

Again, in Decker's Guls Hornbook, 1609: "Your stiff-necked *rebatoes* (that have more arches for pride to row under, than can stand under five London-bridges) durst not then," &c.

Again, in Decker's Untrussing the Humourous Poet: "What a miserable thing it is to be a noble bride! There's such delays in rising, in fitting gowns, in pinning *rebatoes*, in *poaking*," &c.

The first and last of these passages will likewise serve for an additional explanation of the *poking-sticks of steel*, mentioned by Autolycus in The Winter's Tale. Steevens.

[9] — if the hair were a thought browner:] i. e. the false hair attached to the cap; for we learn from Stubbes's Anatomie of

a most rare fashion, i'faith. I saw the duchess of Milan's gown, that they praise so.

Hero. O, that exceeds, they say.

Marg. By my troth it's but a night-gown in respect of yours: Cloth of gold, and cuts, and laced with silver; set with pearls, down sleeves, side-sleeves [1], and skirts round, under-borne with a

Abuses, 1595, p. 40, that ladies were "not simplie content with their own haire, but did buy up other haire either of horses, mares, or any other strange beasts, dying it of what collour they list themselves." Steevens.

See p. 57, n. 2. Malone.

"— a *thought* browner:" i. e. a degree, a little, or as would now be said, a *shade* browner. Thus, in Shirley's Honoria and Mammon, 1659:

"*Col.* They have city faces.

"*Squ.* And are a *thought* too handsome to be serjeants."

Again, in Guzman de Alfarache, fol. 1628, p. ii. b. ii. ch. v.:

"—— that I should lessen it *a thought* in the waist, for that it sits now well before." Reed.

[1] — side-sleeves,] *Side*-sleeves, I believe, mean *long* ones. So, in Greene's Farewell to Follie, 1617: "As great selfe-love lurketh in a *side*-gowne, as in a *short* armour." Again, in Laneham's Account of Queen Elizabeth's Entertainment at Kenelworth-Castle, 1575, the minstrel's "gown had *side*-sleeves down to the mid-leg." Clement Paston (see Paston Letters, vol. i. p. 145, 2d edit.) had "a *short* blue gown that was made of a *side*-gown," i. e. of a *long* one. Again, in The Last Voyage of Captaine Frobisher, by Dionyse Settle, 12mo. bl. l. 1577: "They make their apparel with hoodes and tailes, &c. The men have them not so *syde* as the women."

Such long sleeves, within my memory, were worn by children, and were called *hanging-sleeves;* a term which is preserved in a line, I think, of Dryden:

"And miss in *hanging-sleeves* now shakes the dice."

Side or *syde* in the North of England, and in Scotland, is used for *long* when applied to the garment, and the word has the same signification in the Anglo-Saxon and Danish. Vide Glossary to Gawine Douglas's Virgil. See also A. Wyntown's Cronykil, b. ix. ch. viii. v. 120:

"And for the hete tuk on *syd* gwnys."

To remove an appearance of tautology, as *down-sleeves* may seem synonymous with *side-sleeves*, a comma must be taken out, and the passage printed thus—"Set with pearls down sleeves,

blueish tinsel: but for a fine, quaint, graceful, and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on't.

Hero. God give me joy to wear it, for my heart is exceeding heavy!

Marg. 'Twill be heavier soon, by the weight of a man [2].

Hero. Fye upon thee! art not ashamed?

Marg. Of what, lady? of speaking honourably? Is not marriage honourable in a beggar? Is not your lord honourable without marriage? I think, you would have me say, saving your reverence,—*a husband:* an bad thinking do not wrest true speaking, I'll offend no body: Is there any harm in—*the heavier for a husband?* None, I think, an it be the right husband, and the right wife; otherwise 'tis light, and not heavy: Ask my lady Beatrice else, here she comes.

Enter Beatrice.

Hero. Good morrow, coz.

or down *th'* sleeves." The second paragraph of this note is copied from the Edinburgh Magazine, for Nov. 1786. Steevens.

Side-sleeves were certainly *long* sleeves, as will appear from the following instances. Stowe's Chronicle, p. 327, tempore Hen. IV.: "This time was used exceeding pride in garments, gownes with deepe and broad sleeves commonly called poke sleeves, the servants ware them as well as their masters, which might well have been called the receptacles of the devil, for what they stole they hid in their sleeves, whereof some hung downe to the feete, and at least to the knees, full of cuts and jagges, whereupon were made these verses: [i. e. by Tho. Hoccleve.]

"Now hath this land little neede of broomes,
"To sweepe away the filth out of the streete,
"Sen *side-sleeves* of pennilesse groomes
"Will it up licke be it drie or weete."

Again, in Fitzherbert's Book of Husbandry: "Theyr cotes be so *syde* that they be fayne to tucke them up whan they ride, as women do theyr kyrtels when they go to the market," &c. Reed.

[2] 'Twill be heavier soon, by the weight of a man.] So, in Troilus and Cressida:

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Beat. Good morrow, sweet Hero.

Hero. Why, how now! do you speak in the sick tune?

Beat. I am out of all other tune, methinks.

Marg. Clap us into—*Light o' love*[3]; that goes without a burden; do you sing it, and I'll dance it.

Beat. Yea, *Light o' love*, with your heels!—then if your husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack no barns[4].

[3] — *Light o' love;*] This tune is alluded to in Fletcher's Two Noble Kinsmen. The gaoler's daughter, speaking of a horse, says:

"He gallops to the tune of *Light o'love.*"

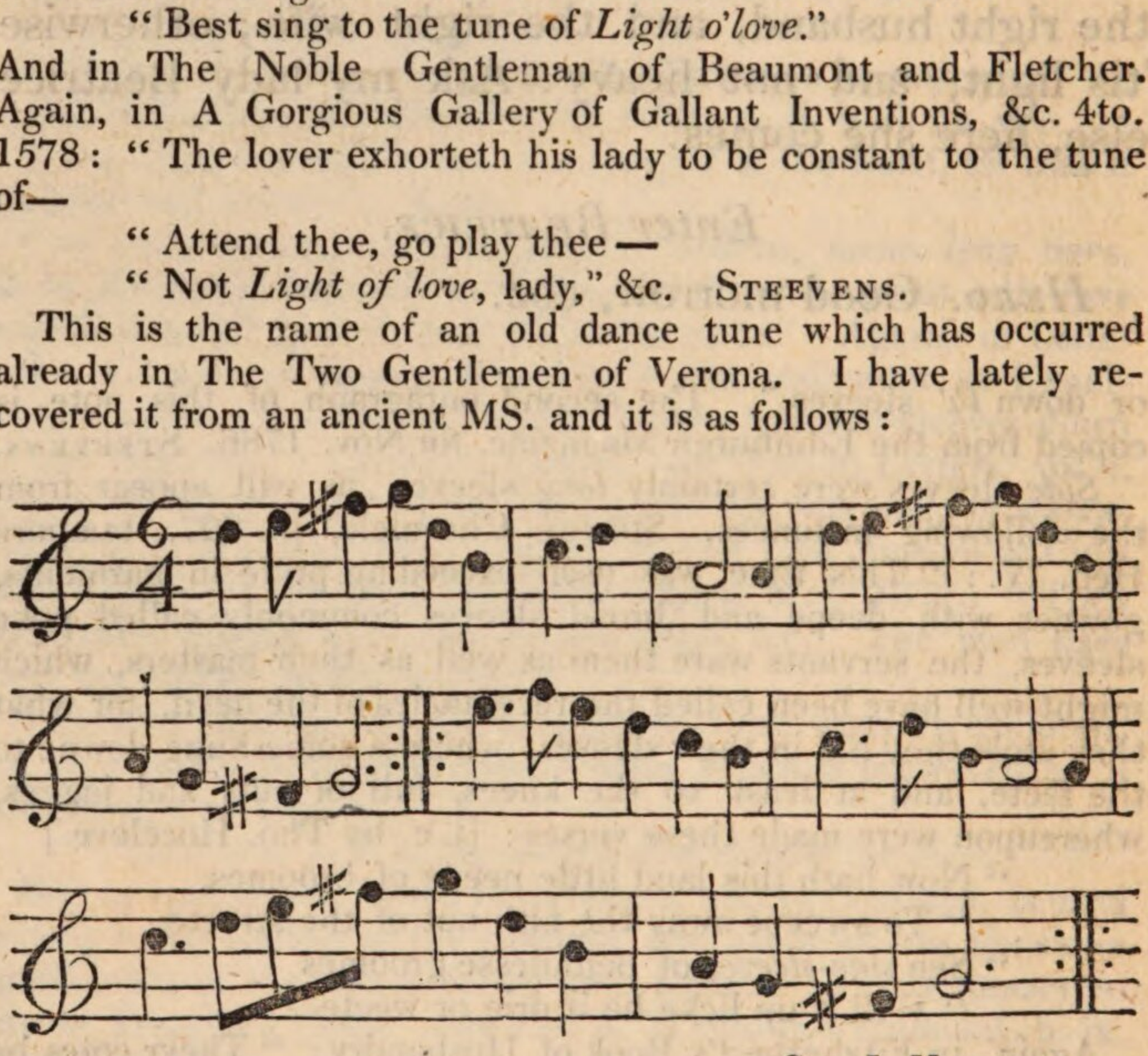
It is mentioned again in The Two Gentlemen of Verona:

"Best sing to the tune of *Light o'love.*"

And in The Noble Gentleman of Beaumont and Fletcher. Again, in A Gorgious Gallery of Gallant Inventions, &c. 4to. 1578: "The lover exhorteth his lady to be constant to the tune of—

"Attend thee, go play thee —
"Not *Light of love*, lady," &c. Steevens.

This is the name of an old dance tune which has occurred already in The Two Gentlemen of Verona. I have lately recovered it from an ancient MS. and it is as follows:



Sir J. Hawkins.

[4] — no barns.] A quibble between *barns*, repositories of corn, and *bairns*, the old word for children. Johnson.

So, in The Winter's Tale:

"Mercy on us, a *barn!* a very pretty *barn!*" Steevens.

Marg. O illegitimate construction! I scorn that with my heels.

Beat. 'Tis almost five o'clock, cousin; 'tis time you were ready. By my troth I am exceeding ill:—hey ho!

Marg. For a hawk, a horse, or a husband [5]?

Beat. For the letter that begins them all, H [6].

Marg. Well, an you be not turned Turk [7], there's no more sailing by the star.

Beat. What means the fool, trow [8]?

[5] — HEY HO!

Marg. FOR a hawk, a horse, or A HUSBAND?] "*Heigh ho for a Husband*, or the Willing Maid's Wants Made Known," is the title of an old ballad in the Pepysian Collection, in Magdalen College, Cambridge. MALONE.

[6] For the letter that begins them all, *H*.] This is a poor jest, somewhat obscured, and not worth the trouble of elucidation.

Margaret asks Beatrice for what she cries, *hey ho;* Beatrice answers, for an *H*, that is for an *ache*, or *pain*. JOHNSON.

Heywood, among his Epigrams, published in 1566, has one on the letter H:

"*H* is worst among letters in the cross-row;
"For if thou find him either in thine elbow,
"In thine arm, or leg, in any degree;
"In thine head, or teeth, or toe, or knee;
"Into what place soever *H* may pike him,
"Wherever thou find *ache* thou shalt not like him."

STEEVENS.

[7] — turned Turk,] i. e. taken captive by love, and turned a renegado to his religion. WARBURTON.

This interpretation is somewhat far-fetched, yet, perhaps, it is right. JOHNSON.

Hamlet uses the same expression, and talks of his *fortune's turning Turk*. *To turn Turk*, was a common phrase for a change of condition or opinion. So, in The Honest Whore, by Decker, 1616:

"If you *turn Turk* again," &c. STEEVENS.

[8] What means the fool, TROW?] This obsolete exclamation of enquiry, is corrupted from *I trow*, or *trow you*, and occurs again in The Merry Wives of Windsor: "Who's there, *trow?*" To *trow* is to *imagine*, to *conceive*. So, in Romeo and Juliet, the Nurse says: "'Twas no need, I *trow*, to bid me trudge."

STEEVENS.

Marg. Nothing I; but God send every one their heart's desire!

Hero. These gloves the count sent me, they are an excellent perfume.

Beat. I am stuffed, cousin, I cannot smell.

Marg. A maid, and stuffed! there's goodly catching of cold.

Beat. O, God help me! God help me! how long have you profess'd apprehension?

Marg. Ever since you left it: doth not my wit become me rarely?

Beat. It is not seen enough, you should wear it in your cap.—By my troth, I am sick.

Marg. Get you some of this distilled Carduus Benedictus [9], and lay it to your heart; it is the only thing for a qualm.

Hero. There thou prick'st her with a thistle.

Beat. Benedictus! why Benedictus? you have some moral [1] in this Benedictus.

9 — Carduus Benedictus,] "*Carduus Benedictus*, or blessed thistle, (says Cogan, in his Haven of Health, 1595,) so worthily named for the singular virtues that it hath."—"This herbe may worthily be called *Benedictus*, or *Omnimorbia*, that is, a salve for every sore, not knowen to physitians of old time, but lately revealed by the speciall providence of Almighty God."

STEEVENS.

1 — some MORAL —] That is, some secret meaning, like the *moral* of a fable. JOHNSON.

Dr. Johnson's explanation is certainly the true one, though it has been doubted. In the Rape of Lucrece our author uses the verb to *moralize* in the same sense:

"Nor could she *moralize* his wanton sight:"

i. e. investigate the *latent meaning* of his looks.

Again, in The Taming of the Shrew: "— and has left me here behind, to expound the meaning or *moral* of his signs and tokens."

Shakspeare's contemporaries used this word with the same meaning. So, in Nashe's Epistle, prefixed to his Apologie of Pierce Pennilesse, 1593: "Aretine, in a commedie of his, wittilie complaineth, that upstart commenters, with their annotations and gloses, had extorted that sense and *moral* out of Petrarch, which,

Marg. Moral? no, by my troth, I have no moral meaning; I meant, plain holy-thistle. You may think, perchance, that I think you are in love: nay, by'r lady, I am not such a fool to think what I list; nor I list not to think what I can; nor, indeed, I cannot think, if I would think my heart out of thinking, that you are in love, or that you will be in love, or that you can be in love: yet Benedick was such another, and now is he become a man: he swore he would never marry; and yet now, in despite of his heart, he eats his meat without grudging [2]: and how you may be converted, I know not; but methinks, you look with your eyes as other women do [3].

Beat. What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

Marg. Not a false gallop.

if Petrarch were alive, a hundred strappadois might not make him confess or subscribe to." I trust no modern Aretine can with justice apply this observation to the commentaries now submitted to the publick. Malone.

Moralizations (for so they were called) are subjoined to many of our ancient Tales, reducing them into Christian or moral lessons. See the Gesta Romanorum, &c. Steevens.

[2] — he eats his meat without grudging:] I do not see how this is a proof of Benedick's change of mind. It would afford more proof of amorousness to say, 'he eats *not* his meat without grudging;' but it is impossible to fix the meaning of proverbial expressions: perhaps, *to eat meat without grudging*, was the same as, *to do as others do*, and the meaning is, 'he is content to live by eating like other mortals, and will be content, notwithstanding his boasts, like other mortals, to have a wife.'

Johnson.

Johnson considers this passage too literally. The meaning of it is, that Benedick *is in love, and takes kindly to it*. M. Mason.

The meaning, I think, is, "and yet now, in spite of his resolution to the contrary, he *feeds* on *love*, and likes his food."

Malone.

[3] — you look with your eyes as other women do.] i. e. you direct your eyes toward the same object; viz. a husband.

Steevens.

Re-enter URSULA.

URS. Madam, withdraw; the prince, the count, signior Benedict, Don John, and all the gallants of the town, are come to fetch you to church.

HERO. Help to dress me, good coz, good Meg, good Ursula. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

Another Room in LEONATO's House.

Enter LEONATO, *with* DOGBERRY *and* VERGES.

LEON. What would you with me, honest neighbour?

DOGB. Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you, that decerns you nearly.

LEON. Brief, I pray you; for you see, 'tis a busy time with me.

DOGB. Marry, this it is, sir.

VERG. Yes, in truth it is, sir.

LEON. What is it, my good friends?

DOGB. Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little off the matter: an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt, as, God help, I would desire they were; but, in faith, honest, as the skin between his brows [4].

VERG. Yes, I thank God, I am as honest as any

[4] — honest, as the skin between his brows.] This is a proverbial expression. STEEVENS.

So, in Gammer Gurton's Needle, 1575:

"I am as true, I would thou knew, as *skin betwene thy brows*."

Again, in Cartwright's Ordinary, Act V. Sc. II.:

"I am as *honest as the skin that is between thy brows*."

REED.

man living, that is an old man, and no honester than I [5].

Dogb. Comparisons are odorous: *palabras* [6], neighbour Verges.

Leon. Neighbours, you are tedious [7].

Dogb. It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor duke's officers [8]; but, truly, for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship.

Leon. All thy tediousness on me! ha!

Dogb. Yea, and 'twere a thousand times more than 'tis: for I hear as good exclamation on your worship, as of any man in the city; and though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it.

Verg. And so am I.

Leon. I would fain know what you have to say.

Verg. Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting

[5] I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honester than I.] There is much humour, and extreme good sense, under the covering of this blundering expression. It is a sly insinuation, that length of years, and the being much *hacknied in the ways of men*, as Shakspeare expresses it, take off the gloss of virtue, and bring much defilement on the manners. For, as a great wit [Swift] says, "Youth is the season of virtue: corruptions grow with years, and I believe the oldest rogue in England is the greatest." Warburton.

Much of this is true; but I believe Shakspeare did not intend to bestow all this reflection on the speaker. Johnson.

[6] — *palabras*,] So, in The Taming of the Shrew, the Tinker says, *pocas pallabras*, i. e. few words. A scrap of Spanish, which might once have been current among the vulgar, and had appeared, as Mr. Henley observes, in The Spanish Tragedy: "*Pocas Pallabras*, milde as the lambe." Steevens.

[7] Neighbours, you are tedious.] This seems a reproach to which constables were proverbially subject in our author's time. So, in Cynthia's Revels: "Ten *constables* are not so *tedious*." Malone.

[8] — we are the poor duke's officers;] This stroke of pleasantry (arising from a transposition of the epithet—*poor*,) has already occurred in Measure for Measure, Act II. Sc. I. where Elbow says: "If it please your honour, I am the *poor duke's* constable." Steevens.

your worship's presence, have ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina.

Dogb. A good old man, sir; he will be talking; as they say, When the age is in, the wit is out; God help us! it is a world to see[9]!—Well said, i'faith, neighbour Verges:—well, God's a good man[1]; an two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind[2]:—An honest soul, i'faith, sir; by my troth he is, as ever broke bread: but, God is to be worshipped: All men are not alike; alas good neighbour!

[9] — it is a world to see!] i. e. it is wonderful to see. So, in All for Money, an old morality, 1594: "*It is a world to see* how greedy they be of money." The same phrase often occurs, with the same meaning, in Holinshed. Steevens.

Again, in a letter from the Earl of Worcester to the Earl of Salisbury, 1609: "While this tragedee was acting *yt was a world* to heare the reports heare." *Lodge's Illustrations*, vol. iii. p. 380. Reed.

Rather, *it is worth seeing*. Barret, in his Alvearie, 1580, explains, "It is a world to heare," by *it is a thing worthie the hearing*. Audire est operæ pretium. *Horat.*

And, in The Myrrour of Good Manners compyled in Latyn by Domynike Mancyn and translate into Englyshe by Alexander Bercley prest. Imprynted by Rychard Pynson, bl. l. no date, the line "*Est operæ pretium* doctos spectare colonos"—is rendered "*A world it is to se* wyse tyllers of the grounde."

Holt White.

[1] —well, God's a good man;] So, in the old Morality or Interlude of Lusty Juventus:

"He wyl say, that *God is a good Man*,
"He can make him no better, and say the best he can."

Again, in A Mery Geste of Robin Hoode, bl. l. no date:

"For *God* is hold *a righteous man*,
"And so is his dame," &c.

Again, in Burton's Anatomie of Melancholy, edit. 1632, p. 670: "*God is a good man*, and will doe no harme," &c. Steevens.

[2] — an two men ride, &c.] This is not out of place, or without meaning. Dogberry, in his vanity of superior parts, apologizing for his neighbour, observes, that *of two men on an horse, one must ride behind*. The *first* place of rank or understanding can belong but to *one*, and that happy *one* ought not to despise his inferiour. Johnson.

Leon. Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

Dogb. Gifts, that God gives.

Leon. I must leave you.

Dogb. One word, sir: our watch, sir, have, indeed, comprehended two aspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship.

Leon. Take their examination yourself, and bring it me; I am now in great haste, as it may appear unto you.

Dogb. It shall be suffigance.

Leon. Drink some wine ere you go; fare you well.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. My lord, they stay for you to give your daughter to her husband.

Leon. I will wait upon them; I am ready.

[*Exeunt Leonato and Messenger.*

Dogb. Go, good partner, go, get you to Francis Seacoal, bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the gaol; we are now to examination these men.

Verg. And we must do it wisely.

Dogb. We will spare for no wit, I warrant you; here's that [*touching his forehead*] shall drive some of them to a *non com*[3]: only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication, and meet me at the gaol. [*Exeunt.*

[3] — to a NON COM:] i. e. to a *non compos mentis*; put them out of their wits:—or, perhaps, he confounds the term with *non-plus*. MALONE.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Inside of a Church.

Enter Don PEDRO, *Don* JOHN, LEONATO, *Friar*, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, HERO, *and* BEATRICE, *&c.*

Leon. Come, friar Francis, be brief; only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

Friar. You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady?

Claud. No.

Leon. To be married to her, friar; you come to marry her.

Friar. Lady, you come hither to be married to this count?

Hero. I do.

Friar. If either of you know any inward impediment [3] why you should not be conjoined, I charge you, on your souls, to utter it.

Claud. Know you any, Hero?

Hero. None, my lord.

Friar. Know you any, count?

Leon. I dare make his answer, none.

Claud. O, what men dare do! what men may do! what men daily do! not knowing what they do!

Bene. How now! Interjections? Why, then some be of laughing [4], as, ha! ha! he!

Claud. Stand thee by, friar:—Father, by your leave;

[3] If either of you know any inward impediment, &c.] This is borrowed from our Marriage Ceremony, which (with a few slight changes in phraseology) is the same as was used in the time of Shakspeare. DOUCE.

[4] —some be of laughing,] This is a quotation from the Accidence. JOHNSON.

Will you with free and unconstrained soul
Give me this maid, your daughter?

Leon. As freely, son, as God did give her me.

Claud. And what have I to give you back, whose worth
May counterpoise this rich and precious gift.

D. Pedro. Nothing, unless you render her again.

Claud. Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.—
There, Leonato, take her back again;
Give not this rotten orange to your friend;
She's but the sign and semblance of her honour:—
Behold, how like a maid she blushes here:
O, what authority and show of truth
Can cunning sin cover itself withal!
Comes not that blood, as modest evidence,
To witness simple virtue? Would you not swear,
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? But she is none:
She knows the heat of a luxurious bed[5]:
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

Leon. What do you mean, my lord?

Claud. Not to be married,
Not to knit my soul[6] to an approved wanton.

Leon. Dear my lord, if you, in your own proof[7]

5 — LUXURIOUS bed:] That is, *lascivious*. *Luxury* is the confessor's term for unlawful pleasures of the sex. JOHNSON.

Thus Pistol, in King Henry V. calls Fluellen a—

"——damned and *luxurious* mountain goat." STEEVENS.

Again, in The Life and Death of Edward II. p. 129:

"*Luxurious* Queene, this is thy foule desire." REED.

6 NOT TO KNIT my soul, &c.] The old copies read, injuriously to metre,—Not *to* knit, &c. I suspect, however, that our author wrote—*Nor* knit, &c. STEEVENS.

7 DEAR my lord, if you, in your own proof—] *In your own proof* may signify *in your own trial of her*. TYRWHITT.

Dear, like *door*, *fire*, *hour*, and many similar words, is here used as a dissyllable. MALONE.

Have vanquish'd the resistance of her youth,
And made defeat of her virginity,——
Claud. I know what you would say; If I have known her,
You'll say, she did embrace me as a husband,
And so extenuate the 'forehand sin:
No, Leonato,
I never tempted her with word too large [8];
But, as a brother to his sister, show'd
Bashful sincerity, and comely love.
Hero. And seem'd I ever otherwise to you?
Claud. Out on thy seeming [9]! I will write against it [1]:
You seem to me as Dian in her orb;
As chaste as is the bud [2] ere it be blown;
But you are more intemperate in your blood
Than Venus, or those pamper'd animals
That rage in savage sensuality.
Hero. Is my lord well, that he doth speak so wide [3]?
Leon. Sweet prince, why speak not you?
D. Pedro. What should I speak?
I stand dishonour'd, that have gone about

[8] — word too LARGE;] So he uses *large jests* in this play, for *licentious, not restrained within due bounds.* JOHNSON.

[9] —— THY seeming!] The old copies have *thee.* The emendation is Mr. Pope's. In the next line Shakspeare probably wrote—*seem'd.* MALONE.

[1] — I will WRITE AGAINST IT:] So, in Cymbeline, Posthumus, speaking of women, says:

"—— I'll *write against them,*
"Detest them, curse them." STEEVENS.

[2] — chaste as is the bud —] Before the air has tasted its sweetness. JOHNSON.

[3] — that he doth speak so WIDE?] i. e. so remotely from the present business. So, in Troilus and Cressida: "No, no; no such matter, you are *wide.*" Again, in The Merry Wives of Windsor: "I never heard a man of his place, gravity, and learning, so *wide* of his own respect." STEEVENS.

To link my dear friend to a common stale.

Leon. Are these things spoken? or do I but dream[4]?

D. John. Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.

Bene. This looks not like a nuptial.

Hero. True, O God!

Claud. Leonato, stand I here?
Is this the prince? Is this the prince's brother?
Is this face Hero's? Are our eyes our own?

Leon. All this is so; But what of this, my lord?

Claud. Let me but move one question to your daughter;
And, by that fatherly and kindly power[5]
That you have in her, bid her answer truly.

Leon. I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.

Hero. O God, defend me! how am I beset!—
What kind of catechizing call you this?

Claud. To make you answer truly to your name.

Hero. Is it not Hero? Who can blot that name
With any just reproach?

Claud. Marry, that can Hero;
Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue.
What man was he talk'd with you yesternight
Out at your window, betwixt twelve and one?
Now, if you are a maid, answer to this.

Hero. I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord.

[4] Are these things spoken? or do I but dream?] So, in Macbeth:

"Were such things here, as we do speak about?
"Or have we," &c. STEEVENS.

[5] — KINDLY power —] That is, *natural power*. *Kind* is *nature*. JOHNSON.

Thus, in the Induction to The Taming of the Shrew:

"This do, and do it *kindly*, gentle sirs:"

i. e. naturally. STEEVENS.

D. Pedro. Why, then are you no maiden.—
Leonato,
I am sorry you must hear; Upon mine honour,
Myself, my brother, and this grieved count,
Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night,
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber-window;
Who hath, indeed, most like a liberal villain [5],
Confess'd the vile encounters they have had
A thousand times in secret.

D. John. Fye, fye! they are
Not to be nam'd, my lord, not to be spoke of;
There is not chastity enough in language,
Without offence, to utter them: Thus, pretty lady,
I am sorry for thy much misgovernment.

Claud. O Hero! what a Hero hadst thou been [6],
If half thy outward graces had been placed
About thy thoughts, and counsels of thy heart!
But, fare thee well, most foul, most fair! farewell,
Thou pure impiety, and impious purity!
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love,
And on my eye-lids shall conjecture [7] hang,
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,

[5] —LIBERAL villain,] *Liberal* here, as in many places of these plays, means *frank*, *beyond honesty*, or *decency*. *Free of tongue*. Dr. Warburton unnecessarily reads, *illiberal*. JOHNSON.

So, in The Fair Maid of Bristow, 1605:

"But Vallinger, most like a *liberal* villain,
"Did give her scandalous ignoble terms."

Again, in The Captain, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"And give allowance to your *liberal* jests
"Upon his person." STEEVENS.

This sense of the word *liberal* is not peculiar to Shakspeare. John Taylor, in his Suite concerning Players, complains of the "many aspersions very *liberally*, unmannerly, and ingratefully bestowed upon him." FARMER.

[6] — what a Hero hadst thou been,] I am afraid here is intended a poor conceit upon the word *Hero*. JOHNSON.

[7] — conjecture —] *Conjecture* is here used for *suspicion*. MALONE.

And never shall it more be gracious [8].

Leon. Hath no man's dagger here a point for me [9]? [*Hero swoons.*

Beat. Why, how now, cousin? wherefore sink you down?

D. John. Come, let us go: these things, come thus to light,
Smother her spirits up.

[*Exeunt Don Pedro, Don John, and Claudio.*

Bene. How doth the lady?

Beat. Dead, I think;—help, uncle;—
Hero! why, Hero!—Uncle!—Signior Benedick!—friar!

Leon. O fate, take not away thy heavy hand!
Death is the fairest cover for her shame,
That may be wish'd for.

Beat. How now, cousin Hero?

Friar. Have comfort, lady.

Leon. Dost thou look up [1]?

Friar. Yea; Wherefore should she not?

Leon. Wherefore? Why, doth not every earthly thing
Cry shame upon her? Could she here deny

[8] And never shall it more be GRACIOUS.] i. e. lovely, attractive. MALONE.

So, in King John:

"There was not such a *gracious* creature born."

STEEVENS.

[9] Hath no man's dagger here a point for me?] So, in Venice Preserved:

"A thousand daggers, all in honest hands!
"And have not I a friend to stick one here!" STEEVENS.

[1] Dost thou look up?] The metre is here imperfect. Perhaps our author wrote—'Dost thou *still* look up?' STEEVENS.

The metre of this line is perfect, if we read as in the text:

"*Leon.* Dost thou look up?
"*Friar.* Yea; Wherefore should she not?"

No arrangement can prevent a hemistich occurring somewhere in this passage. BOSWELL.

The story that is printed in her blood [2] ?—
Do not live, Hero; do not ope thine eyes:
For did I think thou would'st not quickly die,
Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames,
Myself would, on the rearward of reproaches,
Strike at thy life. Griev'd I, I had but one?
Chid I for that at frugal nature's frame [3] ?
O, one too much by thee! Why had I one?
Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes?
Why had I not with charitable hand,
Took up a beggar's issue at my gates;
Who smirched thus [4], and mired with infamy,

[2] The story that is printed in her blood?] That is, 'the story which her blushes discover to be true.' JOHNSON.

[3] Chid I for that at frugal nature's FRAME?] *Frame* is *contrivance, order, disposition of things.* So, in The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington, 1603:

"And therefore seek to set each thing in *frame*."

Again, in Holinshed's Chronicle, p. 555: "— there was no man that studied to bring the unrulie to *frame*."

Again, in Daniel's Verses on Montaigne:

"—— extracts of men,
"Though in a troubled *frame* confus'dly set."

Again, in this play:

"Whose spirits toil in *frame* of villainies." STEEVENS.

It seems to me, that by "*frugal nature's frame*," Leonato alludes to the particular formation of himself, or of Hero's mother, rather than to the universal system of things. *Frame* means here *framing*, as it does where Benedick says of John, that—

"His spirits toil in *frame* of villainies."

Thus Richard says of Prince Edward, that he was—

"*Fram'd* in the prodigality of nature."

And, in All's Well that Ends Well, the King says to Bertram:

"Frank nature, rather curious than in haste,
"Hath well *compos'd* thee."

But Leonato, dissatisfied with his own *frame*, was wont to complain of the *frugality of nature*. M. MASON.

[4] Who SMIRCHED thus, &c.] Thus the quarto 1600. The folio reads—"smeared." To *smirch* is to *daub*, to *sully*. So, in King Henry V.:

"Our gayness and our gilt are all *besmirch'd*," &c. STEEVENS.

I might have said, *No part of it is mine,*
This shame derives itself from unknown loins?
But mine, and mine I lov'd, and mine I prais'd,
And mine that I was proud on [5]; mine so much,
That I myself was to myself not mine,
Valuing of her; why, she—O, she is fallen
Into a pit of ink! that the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again [6];
And salt too little, which may season give
To her foul tainted flesh [7]!

Bene. Sir, sir, be patient:
For my part, I am so attir'd in wonder,
I know not what to say.

Beat. O, on my soul, my cousin is belied!

Bene. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

Beat. No, truly, not; although, until last night,
I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow.

Leon. Confirm'd, confirm'd! O, that is stronger made,

[5] But mine, AND mine I lov'd, AND mine I prais'd,
AND mine that I was proud on;] The sense requires that we should read *as* in these three places. The reasoning of the speaker stands thus—'Had this been my adopted child, her shame would not have rebounded on me. But this child was mine, *as* mine I loved her, praised her, was proud of her: consequently, as I claimed the glory, I must needs be subject to the shame,' &c. WARBURTON.

Even of this small alteration there is no need. The speaker utters his emotion abruptly. "But mine, and mine *that* I lov'd," &c. by an ellipsis frequent, perhaps too frequent, both in verse and prose. JOHNSON.

[6] — the wide sea
Hath drops too few to wash her clean again;] The same thought is repeated in Macbeth:

"Will all great Neptune's *ocean wash* this blood
"*Clean* from my hand?" STEEVENS.

[7] — which may SEASON give
To her foul tainted flesh!] The same metaphor from the kitchen occurs in Twelfth-Night:

"—— all this to *season*
"A brother's dead love." STEEVENS.

Which was before barr'd up with ribs of iron!
Would the two princes lie? and Claudio lie?
Who lov'd her so, that, speaking of her foulness,
Wash'd it with tears? Hence from her; let her die.

FRIAR. Hear me a little;
For I have only been silent so long,
And given way unto this course of fortune,
By noting of the lady: I have mark'd
A thousand blushing apparitions start
Into her face; a thousand innocent shames
In angel whiteness bear away those blushes;
And in her eye there hath appear'd a fire,
To burn the errors[8] that these princes hold
Against her maiden truth:—Call me a fool:
Trust not my reading, nor my observations,
Which with experimental seal doth warrant
The tenour of my book[9]; trust not my age,
My reverence, calling, nor divinity,
If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here
Under some biting error.

LEON. Friar, it cannot be:
Thou seest, that all the grace that she hath left,
Is, that she will not add to her damnation
A sin of perjury; she not denies it:
Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse
That which appears in proper nakedness?

FRIAR. Lady, what man is he you are accus'd of[1]?

[8] To BURN the ERRORS —] The same idea occurs in Romeo and Juliet:

"Transparent *hereticks* be *burnt* for liars." STEEVENS.

[9] — of my BOOK;] i. e. of what I have read. MALONE.

[1] *Friar.* — what man is he you are accus'd of?] The Friar had just before boasted his great skill in fishing out the truth. And, indeed, he appears by this question to be no fool. He was by, all the while at the accusation, and heard no name mentioned. Why then should he ask her what man she was accused of? But in this lay the subtilty of his examination. For had Hero been guilty, it was very probable that in that hurry and confusion of spirits, into which the terrible insult of her lover had thrown her,

Hero. They know, that do accuse me; I know none:
If I know more of any man alive,
Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
Let all my sins lack mercy!—O my father,
Prove you that any man with me convers'd
At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight
Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,
Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death.

Friar. There is some strange misprision in the princes.

Bene. Two of them have the very bent of honour[2];
And if their wisdoms be misled in this,
The practice of it lives in John the bastard,
Whose spirits toil in frame of villainies.

Leon. I know not; If they speak but truth of her,
These hands shall tear her; if they wrong her honour,
The proudest of them shall well hear of it.
Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
Nor age so eat up my invention,
Nor fortune made such havock of my means,
Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,
But they shall find, awak'd in such a kind,
Both strength of limb, and policy of mind,
Ability in means, and choice of friends,

she would never have observed that the man's name was not mentioned; and so, on this question, have betrayed herself by naming the person she was conscious of an affair with. The Friar observed this, and so concluded, that were she guilty, she would probably fall into the trap he laid for her.—I only take notice of this to show how admirably well Shakspeare knew how to sustain his characters. Warburton.

[2] — bent of honour;] *Bent* is used by our author for the utmost degree of any passion, or mental quality. In this play before, Benedick says of Beatrice, "her affection has its full *bent*." The expression is derived from archery; the bow has its *bent*, when it is drawn as far as it can be. Johnson.

To quit me of them throughly.
FRIAR. Pause a while,
And let my counsel sway you in this case.
Your daughter here the princes left for dead [3];
Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
And publish it, that she is dead indeed:
Maintain a mourning ostentation [4];
And on your family's old monument
Hang mournful epitaphs, and do all rites
That appertain unto a burial.

LEON. What shall become of this? What will this do?

FRIAR. Marry, this, well carried, shall on her behalf
Change slander to remorse; that is some good:
But not for that, dream I on this strange course,
But on this travail look for greater birth.
She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
Upon the instant that she was accus'd,
Shall be lamented, pitied and excus'd,
Of every hearer: For it so falls out,
That what we have we prize not to the worth,
Whiles we enjoy it; but being lack'd and lost,
Why, then we rack the value [5]; then we find
The virtue, that possession would not show us
Whiles it was ours:—So will it fare with Claudio:
When he shall hear she died upon his words [6],

[3] Your daughter here the PRINCES left for dead:] The old copies read *princess*. The correction was made by Mr. Theobald. MALONE.

[4] — ostentation;] Show, appearance. JOHNSON.

[5] — we RACK the value;] i. e. we *exaggerate* the value. The allusion is to *rack-rents*. The same kind of thought occurs in Antony and Cleopatra:

"What our contempts do often hurl from us,
"We wish it ours again." STEEVENS.

[6] — died UPON his words,] i. e. died *by* them. So, in A Midsummer Night's Dream:

"To die *upon* the hand I love so well." STEEVENS.

The idea of her life shall sweetly creep
Into his study of imagination;
And every lovely organ of her life
Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,
More moving-delicate, and full of life,
Into the eye and prospect of his soul,
Than when she liv'd indeed:—then shall he mourn,
(If ever love had interest in his liver[7],)
And wish he had not so accused her;
No, though he thought his accusation true.
Let this be so, and doubt not but success
Will fashion the event in better shape
Than I can lay it down in likelihood.
But if all aim but this be levell'd false,
The supposition of the lady's death
Will quench the wonder of her infamy:
And, if it sort not well, you may conceal her
(As best befits her wounded reputation,)
In some reclusive and religious life,
Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.

Bene. Signior Leonato, let the friar advise you:
And though you know, my inwardness[8] and love
Is very much unto the prince and Claudio,
Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this
As secretly, and justly, as your soul
Should with your body.

Leon. Being that I flow in grief,
The smallest twine may lead me[9].

J. O.

[7] (If ever LOVE had interest in his LIVER,)] The liver, in conformity to ancient supposition, is frequently mentioned by Shakspeare as the seat of love. Thus Pistol represents Falstaff as loving Mrs. Ford—"with *liver* burning hot." STEEVENS.

[8] —my INWARDNESS—] i. e. intimacy. Thus Lucio, in Measure for Measure, speaking of the Duke, says—"I was an *inward* of his." Again, in King Richard III.:

"Who is most *inward* with the noble duke?" STEEVENS.

[9] The smallest twine may lead me.] This is one of our author's observations upon life. Men overpowered with distress, eagerly

Friar. 'Tis well consented; presently away;
For to strange sores strangely they strain the cure.—
Come, lady, die to live: this wedding day,
Perhaps, is but prolong'd; have patience, and endure.

[*Exeunt Friar, Hero, and Leonato.*

Bene. Lady Beatrice[1], have you wept all this while?

Beat. Yea, and I will weep a while longer.

Bene. I will not desire that.

Beat. You have no reason, I do it freely.

Bene. Surely, I do believe your fair cousin is wrong'd.

Beat. Ah, how much might the man deserve of me, that would right her!

Bene. Is there any way to show such friendship?

Beat. A very even way, but no such friend.

Bene. May a man do it?

Beat. It is a man's office, but not yours.

Bene. I do love nothing in the world so well as you; Is not that strange?

Beat. As strange as the thing I know not: It

listen to the first offers of relief, close with every scheme, and believe every promise. He that has no longer any confidence in himself, is glad to repose his trust in any other that will undertake to guide him. Johnson.

[1] Lady Beatrice, &c.] The poet, in my opinion, has shown a great deal of address in this scene. Beatrice here engages her lover to revenge the injury done her cousin Hero: and without this very natural incident, considering the character of Beatrice, and that the story of her passion for Benedick was all a fable, she could never have been easily or naturally brought to confess she loved him, notwithstanding all the foregoing preparation. And yet, on this confession, in this very place, depended the whole success of the plot upon her and Benedick. For had she not owned her love here, they must have soon found out the trick, and then the design of bringing them together had been defeated; and she would never have owned a passion she had been only tricked into, had not her desire of revenging her cousin's wrong made her drop her capricious humour at once. Warburton.

were as possible for me to say, I loved nothing so well as you: but believe me not; and yet I lie not; I confess nothing, nor I deny nothing:—I am sorry for my cousin.

Bene. By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me.

Beat. Do not swear by it, and eat it.

Bene. I will swear by it, that you love me; and I will make him eat it, that says, I love not you.

Beat. Will you not eat your word?

Bene. With no sauce that can be devised to it: I protest, I love thee.

Beat. Why then, God forgive me!

Bene. What offence, sweet Beatrice?

Beat. You have staid me in a happy hour; I was about to protest, I loved you.

Bene. And do it with all thy heart.

Beat. I love you with so much of my heart, that none is left to protest.

Bene. Come, bid me do any thing for thee.

Beat. Kill Claudio.

Bene. Ha! not for the wide world.

Beat. You kill me to deny it *: Farewell.

Bene. Tarry, sweet Beatrice.

Beat. I am gone, though I am here [2];—There is no love in you:—Nay, I pray you, let me go.

Bene. Beatrice,—

Beat. In faith, I will go.

Bene. We'll be friends first.

Beat. You dare easier be friends with me, than fight with mine enemy.

* First folio omits *it*.

[2] I am gone, though I am here;] i. e. I am out of your mind already, though I remain here in person before you. Steevens.

Or, perhaps, my affection is withdrawn from you, though I am yet here. Malone.

I cannot approve of Steevens's explanation of these words, and believe Beatrice means to say, "I am gone," that is, 'I am lost to you, though I am here.' In this sense Benedick takes them, and desires to be friends with her. M. Mason.

Bene. Is Claudio thine enemy?

Beat. Is he not approved in the height a villain[3], that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman?—O, that I were a man!—What! bear her in hand[4] until they come to take hands: and then with publick accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour,—O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place[5].

Bene. Hear me, Beatrice;—

Beat. Talk with a man out at a window!—a proper saying!

Bene. Nay but, Beatrice;—

Beat. Sweet Hero!—she is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone.

Bene. Beat—

Beat. Princes, and counties[6]! Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly count-confect[7]; a sweet gallant, surely! O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into courtesies[8], valour

[3] —in the HEIGHT a villain,] So, in King Henry VIII.:

"He's a traitor to the *height*."

"*In præcipiti* vitium stetit." *Juv.* I. 149. STEEVENS.

[4] bear her in hand —] i. e. delude her by fair promises. So, in Macbeth:

"How you were *borne in hand*, how cross'd," &c.

STEEVENS.

[5] I would eat his heart in the market-place.] A sentiment as savage is imputed to Achilles by Chapman, in his version of the 22d Iliad:

"Hunger for slaughter, and a hate that eates thy heart, *to eate*

"*Thy foe's heart*."

With equal ferocity, Hecuba, speaking of Achilles, in the 24th Iliad, expresses a wish to employ *her teeth on his liver*.

STEEVENS.

[6] —and COUNTIES!] *County* was the ancient general term for a *nobleman*. See a note on the County Paris in Romeo and Juliet. STEEVENS.

[7] —a goodly COUNT-CONFECT;] i. e. a specious nobleman made out of sugar. STEEVENS.

into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too[9]: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only tells a lie, and swears it:—I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.

Bene. Tarry, good Beatrice: By this hand, I love thee.

Beat. Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

Bene. Think you in your soul the count Claudio hath wronged Hero?

Beat. Yea, as sure as I have a thought, or a soul.

Bene. Enough, I am engaged, I will challenge him; I will kiss your hand, and so leave you: By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account: As you hear of me, so think of me. Go, comfort your cousin: I must say, she is dead; and so, farewell. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II[1].

A Prison.

Enter Dogberry, *Verges, and Sexton, in gowns*[2]; *and the Watch, with* Conrade *and* Borachio.

Dogb. Is our whole dissembly appeared?

[8] — into COURTESIES,] i. e. into ceremonious obeisance, like the *courtesies* dropped by women. Thus, in Othello:

"Very good; well kiss'd! an excellent *courtesy!*"

Again, in King Richard III.:

"Duck with French nods, and apish *courtesy.*" STEEVENS.

[9] — and men are only turned into TONGUE, and trim ones too:] Mr. Heath would read *tongues*, but he mistakes the construction of the sentence, which is—not only men but trim ones, are turned into tongue, i. e. not only *common*, but *clever* men, &c. STEEVENS.

Trim, I believe, does not mean *clever*, but *spruce, fair spoken*. *Tongue* used in the singular, and *trim ones* in the plural, is a mode of construction not uncommon in Shakspeare. MALONE.

Verg. O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton [3]!
Sexton. Which be the malefactors?

[1] Scene II.] The persons throughout this scene have been strangely confounded in the modern editions. The first error has been the introduction of a *Town-Clerk*, who is, indeed, mentioned in the stage-direction, prefixed to this scene in the old editions, (*Enter the Constables, Borachio, and the Towne-Clerke, in gownes,*) but no where else; nor is there a single speech ascribed to him in those editions. The part, which he might reasonably have been expected to take upon this occasion, is performed by *the Sexton;* who assists at, or rather directs, the examinations; sets them down in writing, and reports them to Leonato. It is probable, therefore, I think, that *the Sexton* has been styled *the Town-Clerk*, in the stage-direction above-mentioned, from his doing the duty of such an officer. But the editors, having brought *both Sexton and Town-Clerk* upon the stage, were unwilling, as it seems, that the latter should be a mute personage; and therefore they have put into his mouth *almost all the absurdities* which the poet certainly intended for his ignorant *constable*. To rectify this confusion, little more is necessary than to go back to the old editions, remembering that the names of *Kempe* and *Cowley*, two celebrated actors of the time, are put in this scene, for the names of the persons represented; viz. *Kempe* for *Dogberry*, and *Cowley* for *Verges*. Tyrwhitt.

I have followed Mr. Tyrwhitt's regulation, which is undoubtedly just; but have left Mr. Theobald's notes as I found them.
Steevens.

[2] — in gowns;] It appears from The Black Book, 4to. 1604, that this was the dress of a constable in our author's time: "—when they mist their *constable*, and sawe the *black gowne* of his office lye full in a puddle——."

The Sexton (as Mr. Tyrwhitt observed) is styled in this stage-direction, in the old copies, *the Town-Clerk*, "probably from his doing the duty of such an officer." But this error has only happened here; for throughout the scene itself he is described by his proper title. By mistake also in the quarto, and the folio, which appears to have been printed from it, the name of *Kempe* (an actor in our author's theatre) throughout this scene is prefixed to the speeches of *Dogberry*, and that of *Cowley* to those of *Verges*, except in two or three instances, where either *Constable* or *Andrew* are substituted for *Kempe*. Malone.

[3] O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton!] Perhaps a ridicule was here aimed at The Spanish Tragedy:

"*Hieron.* What, are you ready?
"*Balth.* Bring a *chaire and a cushion* for the king."
Malone.

Dogb. Marry, that am I and my partner.

Verg. Nay, that's certain; we have the exhibition to examine [4].

Sexton. But which are the offenders that are to be examined? let them come before master constable.

Dogb. Yea, marry, let them come before me.—What is your name, friend?

Bora. Borachio.

Dogb. Pray write down—Borachio.——Yours, sirrah?

Con. I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade.

Dogb. Write down—master gentleman Conrade.—Masters, do you serve God?

Con. Bora. Yea, sir, we hope.

Dogb. Write down—that they hope they serve God:—and write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains [5]!—Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves; and it will go near to be thought so shortly. How answer you for yourselves?

Con. Marry, sir, we say we are none.

Dogb. A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you; but I will go about with him.—Come you hither,

4 —we have the EXHIBITION to EXAMINE.] Blunder for *examination* to *exhibit*. See p. 105: "Take their *examination* yourself, and *bring it me*." STEEVENS.

5 *Con. Bora.* Yea, sir, we hope.

Dogb. Write down—that they hope they serve God:—and write God first; for God defend but God should go before such villains!] This short passage, which is truly humorous and in character, I have added from the old quarto. Besides, it supplies a defect: for without it, the Town-Clerk asks a question of the prisoners, and goes on without staying for any answer to it.

THEOBALD.

The omission of this passage since the edition of 1600, may be accounted for from the stat. 3 Jac. I. c. 21, the sacred name being jestingly used four times in one line. BLACKSTONE.

sirrah; a word in your ear, sir; I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves.

Bora. Sir, I say to you, we are none.

Dogb. Well, stand aside.—'Fore God, they are both in a tale[6]: Have you writ down—that they are none?

Sexton. Master constable, you go not the way to examine; you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

Dogb. Yea, marry, that's the eftest way[7]:—Let

[6] 'Fore God, they are both in a tale:] This is an admirable stroke of humour: Dogberry says of the prisoners that they are also knaves; and from that denial of the charge, which one in his wits could not be supposed to make, he infers a communion of counsels, and records it in the examination as an evidence of their guilt. Sir J. Hawkins.

If the learned annotator will amend his comment by omitting the word *guilt*, and inserting the word *innocence*, it will (except as to the supposed inference of a communication of counsels, which should likewise be omitted or corrected,) be a just and pertinent remark. Ritson.

Mr. Ritson's amendment would make the note nonsense. Boswell.

[7] Yea, marry, that's the EFTEST way;] Our modern editors, who were at a loss to make out the corrupted reading of the old copies, read *easiest*. The quarto in 1600, and the first and second editions in folio, all concur in reading—"Yea, marry, that's the *eftest* way," &c. A letter happened to slip out at press in the first edition; and 'twas too hard a task for the subsequent editors to put it in, or guess at the word under this accidental depravation. There is no doubt but the author wrote, as I have restored the text—'Yea, marry, that's the *deftest* way,' i. e. the *readiest*, most *commodious* way. The word is pure Saxon, Deaflice, *debite*, *congrue*, duely, fitly, Ledæthe, *opportune*, *commode*, fitly, conveniently, seasonably, in good time, commodiously. Vide Spelman's Saxon Gloss. Theobald.

Mr. Theobald might have recollected the word *deftly* in Macbeth:

"Thyself and office *deftly* show."

Shakspeare, I suppose, designed Dogberry to corrupt this word as well as many others. Steevens.

Dogberry has here been guilty of no corruption. The *eftest* way is the *quickest* way. See *eft* in Johnson's Dictionary. Boswell.

the watch come forth :—Masters, I charge you, in the prince's name, accuse these men.

1 *Watch*. This man said, sir, that Don John, the prince's brother, was a villain.

Dogb. Write down—prince John a villain :—Why this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother villain.

Bora. Master constable,—

Dogb. Pray thee, fellow, peace; I do not like thy look, I promise thee.

Sexton. What heard you him say else ?

2 *Watch*. Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John, for accusing the lady Hero wrongfully.

Dogb. Flat burglary, as ever was committed.

Verg. Yea, by the mass, that it is.

Sexton. What else, fellow ?

1 *Watch*. And that count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her.

Dogb. O villain ! thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this.

Sexton. What else ?

2 *Watch*. This is all.

Sexton. And this is more, masters, than you can deny. Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away ; Hero was in this manner accused, in this very manner refused, and upon the grief of this suddenly died. Master constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato's ; I will go before, and show him their examination. [*Exit*.

Dogb. Come, let them be opinioned.

Verg. Let them be in the hands.

Con. Off, coxcomb [8] !

[8] Let them be in the hands OF COXCOMB.] So the editions. Mr. Theobald gives these words to Conrade, and says—"But why the Sexton should be so pert upon his brother officers,

Dogb. God's my life! where's the sexton? let him write down—the prince's officer, coxcomb.—Come, bind them:——Thou naughty varlet!

there seems no reason from any superior qualifications in him; or any suspicion he shows of knowing their ignorance." This is strange. The Sexton throughout shows as good sense in their examination as any judge upon the bench could do. And as to *his suspicion of their ignorance*, he tells the Town-Clerk, *That he goes not the way to examine.* The meanness of his name hindered our editor from seeing the goodness of his sense. But this Sexton was an ecclesiastic of one of the inferior orders, called the *sacristan*, and not a *brother officer*, as the editor calls him. I suppose the book from whence the poet took his subject, was some old English novel translated from the Italian, where the *sagristano* was rendered *sexton*. As in Fairfax's Godfrey of Boulogne:

" When Phœbus next unclos'd his wakeful eye,
" Up rose the *Sexton* of that place prophane."

The passage then in question is to be read thus:

" *Sexton.* Let them be in hand. [*Exit.*
" *Con.* Off, coxcomb!"

Dogberry would have them pinioned. The Sexton says, it was sufficient if they were kept in safe custody, and then goes out. When one of the watchmen comes up to bind them, Conrade says, " Off, coxcomb!" as he says afterwards to the constable, " Away! you are an ass."—But the editor adds, " The old quarto gave me the first umbrage for placing it to Conrade." What these words mean I don't know: but I suspect the old quarto divides the passage as I have done. Warburton.

Theobald has fairly given the reading of the quarto.

Dr. Warburton's assertion, as to the dignity of a *sexton* or *sacristan*, may be supported by the following passage in Stanyhurst's version of the fourth book of the Æneid, where he calls the Massylian priestess:

" —— in soil Massyla begotten,
" *Sexten* of Hesperides sinagog." Steevens.

" Let them be in hand." I had conjectured that these words should be given to Verges, and read thus—' Let them bind their *hands*.' I am still of opinion that the passage belongs to Verges; but, for the true reading of it, I should wish to adopt a much neater emendation, which has since been suggested to me in conversation by Mr. Steevens—' Let them be in *band*.' Shakspeare, as he observed to me, commonly uses *band* for *bond*.

Tyrwhitt.

So, in King Henry VI. P. III.:

Con. Away! you are an ass, you are an ass.

Dogb. Dost thou not suspect my place? Dost thou not suspect my years?—O that he were here to write me down an ass!—but, masters, remember, that I am an ass; though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass:—No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be proved upon thee by good witness. I am a wise fellow; and, which is more, an officer; and, which is more, a householder; and, which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina; and one that knows the law, go to; and a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses; and one that hath two gowns, and every thing handsome about him: Bring him away. O, that I had been writ down an ass! [*Exeunt.*

"And die in *bands* for this unmanly deed!"

It is plain that they were *bound*, from a subsequent speech of Pedro: "Whom have you offended, masters, that you are thus *bound* to your answer?" STEEVENS.

"*Off*, coxcomb!" The old copies read—*of*, and these words make a part of the last speech, "Let them be in the hands *of coxcomb*." The present regulation was made by Dr. Warburton, and has been adopted by the subsequent editors. *Off* was formerly spelt *of*. In the early editions of these plays a broken sentence (like that before us—*Let them be in the hands*—) is almost always corrupted by being tacked, through the ignorance of the transcriber or printer, to the subsequent words. So, in Coriolanus, instead of—

"You shades of Rome! you herd of—Boils and Plagues
"Plaster you o'er!"

we have in the folio 1623, and the subsequent copies—

"You shames of Rome, you! Herd of boils and plagues," &c.

See also Measure for Measure.

Perhaps, however, we should read and regulate the passage thus:

'*Ver.* Let them be in the hands of—[*the law*, he might have intended to say.]

'*Con.* Coxcomb!' MALONE.

There is nothing in the old quarto different in this scene from the common copies, except that the names of two actors, *Kempe* and *Cowley*, are placed at the beginning of the speeches, instead of the proper words. JOHNSON.

ACT V. SCENE I.

Before LEONATO's House.

Enter LEONATO *and* ANTONIO.

ANT. If you go on thus, you will kill yourself;
And 'tis not wisdom, thus to second grief
Against yourself.

LEON. I pray thee, cease thy counsel,
Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve: give not me counsel;
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear,
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.
Bring me a father, that so lov'd his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak of patience [9];
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer every strain for strain;
As thus for thus, and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form;
If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard;
Cry—sorrow, wag [1]! and hem, when he should
groan [1];

9 And bid him speak of patience;] Read—
"And bid him speak *to me* of patience." RITSON.

1 Cry—sorrow, wag! and hem, when he should groan:] The quarto 1600, and folio 1623, read—
"And *sorrow, wagge*, cry hem," &c.
Mr. Rowe and Mr. Pope—
"And *hallow*, wag," &c.
Mr. Theobald—
"And sorrow *wage*," &c.
Sir Tho. Hanmer and Dr. Warburton—
"And sorrow *waive*," &c.
Mr. Tyrwhitt—
"And sorrow *gagge*," &c.
Mr. Heath and Mr. T. Warton—
"And *sorrowing* cry hem," &c.
I had inadvertently offered—
"And, *sorry* wag!" &c.

Patch grief with proverbs; make misfortune drunk
With candle-wasters[2]; bring him yet to me,

Mr. Ritson—

"And sorrow *waggery*," &c.

Mr. Malone—

"*In* sorrow wag," &c.

But I am persuaded that Dr. Johnson's explanation as well as arrangement of the original words, is apposite and just: I cannot (says he) but think the true meaning nearer than it is imagined.

'If such a one will smile and stroke his beard,
'And, sorrow, wag! cry; hem, when he should groan,' &c.

That is, 'If he will smile, and cry *sorrow be gone!* and hem instead of groaning.' The order in which *and* and *cry* are placed, is harsh, and this harshness made the sense mistaken. Range the words in the common order, and my reading will be free from all difficulty.

'If such a one will smile and stroke his beard,
'Cry, sorrow, wag! and hem when he should groan—.'

Thus far Dr. Johnson; and in my opinion he has left succeeding criticks nothing to do respecting the passage before us. Let me, however, claim the honour of supporting his opinion.

To cry—*Care away!* was once an expression of triumph. So, in Acolastus, a comedy, 1540:

"—— I may now say, *Care awaye!*

Again, ibidem: "—— Now grievous *sorrowe and care awaye!*"

Again, at the conclusion of Barnaby Googe's third Eglog:

"Som chestnuts have I there in store,
"With cheese and pleasaunt whaye;
"God sends me vittayles for my need,
"And I synge *Care awaye!*"

Again, as Dr. Farmer observes to me, in George Withers's Philarete, 1622:

"Why should we grieve or pine at that?
"*Hang sorrow!* care will kill a cat."

Sorrow go by! is also (as I am assured) a common exclamation of hilarity even at this time, in Scotland. *Sorrow wag!* might have been just such another. The verb, to *wag*, is several times used by our author in the sense of to *go*, or *pack off*.

The Prince, in The First Part of King Henry IV. Act II. Sc. IV. says—"They cry *hem!* and bid you play it off." And Mr. M. Mason observes that this expression also occurs in As You Like It, where Rosalind says—"These burs are in my heart;" and Celia

And I of him will gather patience.
But there is no such man: For, brother, men
Can counsel, and speak comfort to that grief
Which they themselves not feel; but, tasting it,
Their counsel turns to passion, which before
Would give preceptial medicine to rage,
Fetter strong madness in a silken thread,
Charm ach with air, and agony with words:
No, no; 'tis all men's office to speak patience
To those that wring under the load of sorrow;

replies—"*Hem* them away." The foregoing examples sufficiently prove the exclamation *hem* to have been of a comic turn.
STEEVENS.

[2] —— make misfortune drunk

With CANDLE-WASTERS;] This may mean, either wash away his sorrow among those who sit up all night to drink, and in that sense may be styled *wasters of candles;* or overpower his misfortunes by swallowing flap-dragons in glass, which are described by Falstaff as made of *candles' ends.* STEEVENS.

This is a very difficult passage, and hath not, I think, been satisfactorily cleared up. The explanation I shall offer, will give, I believe, as little satisfaction; but I will, however, venture it. *Candle-wasters* is a term of contempt for scholars: thus Jonson, in Cynthia's Revels, Act III. Sc. II.: "—spoiled by a whoreson book-worm, a *candle-waster.*" In The Antiquary, Act III. is a like term of ridicule: "He should more catch your delicate court-ear, than all your head-scratchers, thumb-biters, *lamp-wasters* of them all." The sense then, which I would assign to Shakspeare, is this: '*If such a one will patch grief with proverbs,*—case or cover the wounds of his grief with proverbial sayings;—*make misfortune drunk with candle-wasters,*—stupify misfortune, or render himself insensible to the strokes of it, by the conversation or lucubrations of scholars; the production of the *lamp,* but not fitted to human nature." *Patch,* in the sense of mending a defect or breach, occurs in Hamlet, Act V. Sc. I.:

"O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
"Should *patch* a wall, to expel the winter's flaw."

WHALLEY.

I have no doubt that *candle-wasters* in the passage before us means *drunkards;* men who waste candles while they pass the night in drinking. The word *drunk* strongly supports this interpretation. MALONE.

But no man's virtue, nor sufficiency,
To be so moral, when he shall endure
The like himself: therefore give me no counsel:
My griefs cry louder than advertisement[3].

Ant. Therein do men from children nothing differ.

Leon. I pray thee, peace: I will be flesh and blood;
For there was never yet philosopher,
That could endure the tooth-ach patiently;
However they have writ the style of gods[4],
And made a pish at chance and sufferance[5].

Ant. Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself;
Make those, that do offend you, suffer too.

3 —— than ADVERTISEMENT.] That is, than *admonition*, than *moral instruction*. JOHNSON.

4 However they have writ THE STYLE OF GODS,] This alludes to the extravagant titles the Stoics gave their wise men. *Sapiens* ille cum *Diis*, ex pari, vivit. *Senec. Ep.* 59. Jupiter, quo antecedit virum bonum? diutius bonus est. *Sapiens* nihilo se minoris æstimat.—*Deus* non vincit *sapientem* felicitate. *Ep.* 73. WARBURTON.

Shakspeare might have used this expression, without any acquaintance with the hyperboles of stoicism. By the *style of gods*, he meant an exalted language; such as we may suppose would be written by beings superior to human calamities, and therefore regarding them with neglect and coldness.

Beaumont and Fletcher have the same expression in the first of their Four Plays in One:

" Athens doth make women philosophers,
" And sure their children chat *the talk of gods*."

STEEVENS.

5 And made a pish at CHANCE AND SUFFERANCE.] Alludes to their famous *apathy*. WARBURTON.

The old copies read—*push*. Corrected by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

I think the old reading is right. To make a *push* at any thing is to contend against it, or defy it. *Push*, in the sense of an *attack* or *onset*, is frequently found both in Spenser and Shakspeare. See Johnson's Dictionary; where we also meet with the very phrase in question, quoted from L'Estrange: "Away he goes, *makes his push*, stands the shock of a battle," &c. BOSWELL.

Leon. There thou speak'st reason: nay, I will do so:
My soul doth tell me, Hero is belied;
And that shall Claudio know, so shall the prince,
And all of them, that thus dishonour her.

Enter Don Pedro and Claudio.

Ant. Here comes the prince, and Claudio, hastily.

D. Pedro. Good den, good den.

Claud. Good day to both of you.

Leon. Hear you, my lords,—

D. Pedro. We have some haste, Leonato.

Leon. Some haste, my lord!—well, fare you well, my lord:—
Are you so hasty now?—well, all is one.

D. Pedro. Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man.

Ant. If he could right himself with quarreling,
Some of us would lie low.

Claud. Who wrongs him?

Leon. Marry, thou [6] dost wrong me; thou dissembler, thou:—
Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword,
I fear thee not.

Claud. Marry, beshrew my hand,
If it should give your age such cause of fear:
In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.

Leon. Tush, tush, man, never fleer and jest at me:
I speak not like a dotard, nor a fool:
As, under privilege of age, to brag
What I have done being young, or what would do,
Were I not old: Know, Claudio, to thy head,
Thou hast so wrong'd mine innocent child and me,

[6] Marry, thou —] So the old copies. Mr. Steevens puts *marry* at the end of the preceding line, and repeats *thou* for the sake of measure. Boswell.

That I am forc'd to lay my reverence by;
And, with grey hairs, and bruise of many days,
Do challenge thee to trial of a man.
I say, thou hast belied mine innocent child;
Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,
And she lyes buried with her ancestors:
O! in a tomb where never scandal slept,
Save this of her's, fram'd by thy villainy.

Claud. My villainy!

Leon. Thine, Claudio; thine I say.

D. Pedro. You say not right, old man.

Leon. My lord, my lord,
I'll prove it on his body, if he dare;
Despite his nice fence[7], and his active practice,
His May of youth, and bloom of lustyhood.

Claud. Away, I will not have to do with you.

Leon. Canst thou so daff me[8]? Thou hast kill'd my child;
If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.

Ant. He shall kill two of us, and men indeed[9]:

[7] Despite his nice FENCE,] i. e. defence, or skill in the science of fencing, or defence. DOUCE.

[8] Canst thou so DAFF me?] This is a country word, Mr. Pope tells us, signifying, *daunt*. It may be so; but that is not the exposition here: To *daff* and *doff* are synonymous terms, that mean to *put off:* which is the very sense required here, and what Leonato would reply, upon Claudio's saying, he would have nothing to do with him. THEOBALD.

Theobald has well interpreted the word. Shakspeare uses it more than once. Thus, in King Henry IV. P. I.:

"The nimble-footed mad-cap Prince of Wales,
"And his comrades, that *daff'd* the world aside."

Again, in the comedy before us:

"I would have *daff'd* all other respects," &c.

Again, in The Lover's Complaint:

"There my white stole of chastity I *daff'd*."

It is, perhaps, of Scottish origin, as I find it in Ane verie excellent and delectabill Treatise intitulit Philotus, &c. Edinburgh, 1603:

"Their *daffing* does us so undo." STEEVENS.

But that's no matter; let him kill one first;—
Win me and wear me,—let him answer me,—
Come, follow me, boy; come, sir boy, come, follow me[1]:
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence[2];
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will.

Leon. Brother,—

Ant. Content yourself: God knows, I lov'd my niece;
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villains;
That dare as well answer a man, indeed,
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue:
Boys, apes, braggarts, Jacks, milksops!—

Leon. Brother Antony.—

Ant. Hold you content; What, man! I know them, yea,
And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple:
Scambling[3], out-facing, fashion-mong'ring * boys,

* Old copies, *fashion-monging*.

9 *Ant.* He shall kill two of us, &c.] This *brother Antony* is the truest picture imaginable of human nature. He had assumed the character of a sage to comfort his brother, overwhelmed with grief for his only daughter's affront and dishonour; and had severely reproved him for not commanding his passion better on so trying an occasion. Yet, immediately after this, no sooner does he begin to suspect that his *age* and *valour* are slighted, but he falls into the most intemperate fit of rage himself; and all he can do or say is not of power to pacify him. This is copying nature with a penetration and exactness of judgment peculiar to Shakspeare. As to the expression, too, of his passion, nothing can be more highly painted. WARBURTON.

1 — come, boy, follow me:] Here the old copies destroy the measure by reading—

"—— come, *sir* boy, *come*, follow me."

I have omitted the unnecessary words. STEEVENS.

2 — FOINING fence;] *Foining* is a term in fencing, and means *thrusting*. DOUCE.

3 Scambling,] i. e. *scrambling*. The word is more than once used by Shakspeare. See Dr. Percy's note on the first speech of the play of King Henry V. and likewise the Scots proverb,—"It is well ken'd your father's son was never a *scambler*." A *scambler*, in its literal sense, is one who goes about among his friends to get a dinner, by the Irish called a *cosherer*. STEEVENS.

That lie, and cog, and flout, deprave and slander,
Go antickly, and show outward hideousness [4],
And speak off half a dozen dangerous words,
How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst,
And this is all.

Leon. But, brother Antony,—

Ant. Come, 'tis no matter;
Do not you meddle, let me deal in this.

D. Pedro. Gentlemen both, we will not wake your patience [5].
My heart is sorry for your daughter's death:
But, on my honour, she was charg'd with nothing
But what was true, and very full of proof.

Leon. My lord, my lord,—

D. Pedro. I will not hear you.

Leon. No?

4 — show OUTWARD HIDEOUSNESS,] i. e. what in K. Henry V. Act. III. Sc. VI. is called —

" —— a *horrid suit* of the camp." STEEVENS.

5 — we will not WAKE your patience.] This conveys a sentiment that the speaker would by no means have implied,—That the patience of the two old men was not exercised, but asleep, which upbraids them for insensibility under their wrong. Shakspeare must have wrote:

—— we will not *wrack* —

i. e. destroy your patience by tantalizing you. WARBURTON.

This emendation is very specious, and perhaps is right; yet the present reading may admit a congruous meaning with less difficulty than many other of Shakspeare's expressions.

The old men have been both very angry and outrageous; the Prince tells them that he and Claudio " will not *wake* their patience;" will not longer force them to *endure* the presence of those whom, though they look on them as enemies, they cannot resist. JOHNSON.

Wake, I believe, is the original word. The ferocity of wild beasts is overcome by not suffering them to sleep. " We will not *wake* your patience," therefore means, 'we will forbear any further provocation.' HENLEY.

The same phrase occurs in Othello:

" Thou hadst been better have been born a dog,
" Than answer my *wak'd* wrath." STEEVENS.

Perhaps we should read—' *waste* your patience.' TALBOT.

Come, brother, away [6]:—I will be heard;—
Ant. And shall,
Or some of us will smart for it.

[*Exeunt* Leonato *and* Antonio.

Enter Benedick.

D. Pedro. See, see; here comes the man we went to seek.

Claud. Now, signior! what news!

Bene. Good day, my lord.

D. Pedro. Welcome, signior: You are almost come to part almost [7] a fray.

Claud. We had like to have had our two noses snapped off with two old men without teeth.

D. Pedro. Leonato and his brother: What think'st thou? Had we fought, I doubt, we should have been too young for them.

Bene. In a false quarrel there is no true valour. I came to seek you both.

Claud. We have been up and down to seek thee; for we are high-proof melancholy, and would fain have it beaten away: Wilt thou use thy wit?

Bene. It is in my scabbard; Shall I draw it?

D. Pedro. Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side?

Claud. Never any did so, though very many have been beside their wit.—I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels [8]; draw, to pleasure us.

[6] Brother, away:—] The old copies, without regard to metre, read—

"*Come*, brother, away," &c.

I have omitted the useless and redundant word—*come*. Steevens.

[7] —to part almost—] This second *almost* appears like a casual insertion of the compositor. As the sense is complete without it, I wish the omission of it had been licensed by either of the ancient copies. Steevens.

[8] I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels;] An allusion perhaps to the itinerant *sword-dancers*. In what low estimation *minstrels* were held in the reign of Elizabeth, may be seen from Stat. Eliz. 39. c. iv. and the term was probably used to denote

D. Pedro. As I am an honest man, he looks pale:—Art thou sick, or angry?

Claud. What! courage, man! What though care killed a cat [9], thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

Bene. Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, an you charge it against me:—I pray you, choose another subject.

Claud. Nay, then give him another staff; this last was broke cross [1].

D. Pedro. By this light, he changes more and more; I think, he be angry indeed.

Claud. If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle [2].

any sort of vagabonds who amused the people at particular seasons. Douce.

Surely the meaning is this—'I will bid thee draw thy sword, as we bid the minstrels draw the bows of their fiddles merely to please or amuse us.' Malone.

9 What though CARE KILLED A CAT,] This is a proverbial expression. See Ray's Proverbs. Douce.

This proverb is recognized by Cob the water bearer, in Every Man in His Humour, Act I. Sc. IV. Reed.

1 Nay, then give him another staff; &c.] An allusion to *tilting*. See note, As You Like It, Act III. Sc. IV. Warburton.

2 — to turn his girdle.] We have a proverbial speech, "If he be angry, let him turn the buckle of his girdle." But I do not know its original or meaning. Johnson.

A corresponding expression is to this day used in Ireland—"If he be angry, let him tie up his brogues." Neither proverb, I believe, has any other meaning than this: 'If he is in a bad humour, let him employ himself till he is in a better.'

Dr. Farmer furnishes me with an instance of this proverbial expression as used by Claudio, from Winwood's Memorials, fol. edit. 1725, vol. i. p. 453. See letter from Winwood to Cecyll, from Paris, 1602, about an affront he received there from *an Englishman*: "I said what I spake was not to make *him* angry. He replied, if I were angry, *I might turn the buckle of my girdle behind me.*" So likewise, Cowley On the Government of Oliver Cromwell: "The next month he swears by the living God, that he will turn them out of doors, and he does so in his princely way

Bene. Shall I speak a word in your ear?

Claud. God bless me from a challenge!

Bene. You are a villain;—I jest not:—I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare:—Do me right[3], or I will protest your cowardice. You have killed a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you: Let me hear from you.

Claud. Well, I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

D. Pedro. What, a feast? a feast?

Claud. I'faith, I thank him; he hath bid[4] me to a calf's-head and a capon; the which if I do not carve most curiously, say, my knife's naught.—Shall I not find a woodcock too[5]?

Bene. Sir, your wit ambles well; it goes easily.

D. Pedro. I'll tell thee how Beatrice praised thy

of threatening, bidding them *turne the buckles of their girdles* behind them." Steevens.

Again, in Knavery in all Trades, or the Coffee-House, 1664, sign. E: "Nay, if the gentleman be angry, let him turn *the buckles of his girdle behind him*." Reed.

Large belts were worn with the buckle before, but for wrestling the buckle was turned behind, to give the adversary a fairer grasp at the girdle. To turn the buckle behind, therefore, was a challenge. Holt White.

[3] Do me right,] This phrase occurs in Justice Silence's song in King Henry IV. Part II. Act V. Sc. III. and was the usual form of challenge to pledge a bumper toast in a bumper. See note on the foregoing passage. Steevens.

[4] —bid—] i. e. invited. So, in Titus Andronicus, Act I. Sc. II.:

"I am not *bid* to wait upon this bride." Reed.

[5] Shall I not find a woodcock too?] A *woodcock*, being supposed to have no brains, was a proverbial term for a foolish fellow. See The London Prodigal, 1605, and other comedies. Malone.

A *woodcock*, means one caught in a springe; alluding to the plot against Benedick. So, in Hamlet, Sc. ult.

"Why, as a *woodcock* to my own springe, Osrick."

Again, in Love's Labour's Lost, Act IV. Sc. III. Biron says—

"——four *woodcocks* in a dish." Douce.

wit the other day: I said, thou hadst a fine wit; *True*, says she, *a fine little one: No*, said I, *a great wit; Right*, says she, *a great gross one: Nay*, said I, *a good wit; Just*, said she, *it hurts no body: Nay*, said I, *the gentleman is wise; Certain*, said she, *a wise gentleman*[6]: *Nay*, said I, *he hath the tongues: That I believe*, said she, *for he swore a thing to me on Monday night, which he forswore on Tuesday morning; there's a double tongue; there's two tongues*. Thus did she, an hour together, trans-shape thy particular virtues; yet, at last, she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the properest man in Italy.

Claud. For the which she wept heartily, and said she cared not.

D. Pedro. Yea, that she did; but yet, for all that, an if she did not hate him deadly, she would love him dearly: the old man's daughter told us all.

Claud. All, all; and moreover, *God saw him when he was hid in the garden.*

D. Pedro. But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's head?

Claud. Yea, and text underneath, *Here dwells Benedick the married man?*

Bene. Fare you well, boy; you know my mind; I will leave you now to your gossip-like humour: you break jests as braggarts do their blades, which, God be thanked, hurt not.—My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you: I must discontinue your company: your brother, the bastard, is fled from Messina: you have, among you, killed a sweet

[6] —*a wise gentleman*:] This jest depending on the colloquial use of words is now obscure; perhaps we should read—a wise gentleman, or, a man wise enough to be a coward. Perhaps *wise gentleman* was in that age used ironically, and always stood for *silly fellow*. Johnson.

We still ludicrously call a man deficient in understanding—*a wise-acre*. Steevens.

and innocent lady: For my lord Lack-beard, there, he and I shall meet; and till then, peace be with him. [*Exit* BENEDICK.

D. PEDRO. He is in earnest.

CLAUD. In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of Beatrice.

D. PEDRO. And hath challenged thee?

CLAUD. Most sincerely.

D. PEDRO What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his wit[7]!

CLAUD. He is then a giant to an ape: but then is an ape a doctor to such a man.

7 What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his wit!] It was esteemed a mark of levity and want of becoming gravity, at that time, *to go in the doublet and hose, and leave off the cloak*, to which this well-turned *expression* alludes. The *thought* is, that love makes a man as ridiculous, and exposes him as naked as being in the doublet and hose without a cloak. WARBURTON.

I doubt much concerning this interpretation, yet am by no means confident that my own is right. I believe, however, these words refer to what Don Pedro had said just before—"And hath *challenged* thee?"—and that the meaning is, 'What a pretty thing a man is, when he is silly enough to throw off his cloak, and go in his doublet and hose, to *fight* for a woman?' In The Merry Wives of Windsor, when Sir Hugh is going to engage with Dr. Caius, he walks about in his doublet and hose: "*Page.* And youthful still in your *doublet and hose*, this raw rheumatick day!"—"There is reasons and causes for it," says Sir Hugh, alluding to the duel he was going to fight.—So, in The Roaring Girl, when Moll Cutpurse, in man's apparel, is going to fight; the stage direction is, she puts off her cloak and draws.—I am aware that there was a particular species of single combat called *rapier and cloak;* but I suppose, nevertheless, that when the small sword came into common use, the cloak was generally laid aside in duels, as tending to embarrass the combatants. MALONE.

Perhaps the whole meaning of the passage is this:—'What an inconsistent fool is man, when he covers his body with clothes, and at the same time divests himself of his understanding!'

STEEVENS.

These words are probably meant to express what Rosalind, in As You Like It, terms the "careless desolation" of a lover.

BOSWELL.

D. Pedro. But, soft you, let be [8]; pluck up, my heart, and be sad [9]! Did he not say, my brother was fled?

Enter Dogberry, Verges, and the Watch, with Conrade and Borachio [1].

Dogb. Come, you, sir; if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance [2]: nay, an you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be looked to.

D. Pedro. How now, two of my brother's men bound! Borachio, one!

Claud. Hearken after their offence, my lord!

[8] But, soft you, LET BE;] The quarto and the first folio read corruptly—"let *me* be," which the editor of the second folio, in order to obtain some sense, converted to—"let me *see*." I was once idle enough to suppose that copy was of some authority; but a minute examination of it has shewn me that all the alterations made in it were merely arbitrary, and generally very injudicious. *Let be* were without doubt the author's words. The same expression occurs again in Antony and Cleopatra, Act IV. Sc. IV.:

"What's this for? Ah, *let be, let be*." MALONE.

If *let be* is the true reading, it must mean, *let things remain as they are*. I have heard the phrase used by Dr. Johnson himself. Mr. Henley observes, that the same expression occurs in St. Matt. xxvii. 49.—I have since met with it in an ancient metrical romance, MS. entitled the Sowdon of Babyloyne, &c.:

"Speke we now of sir Laban,
"And *let* Charles and Gy *be*." STEEVENS.

So, in Henry VIII. Act I. Sc. I.:

"——and they were ratified,
"As he cried, Thus, *let be*."

Again, in the Winter's Tale, Act V. Sc. III. Leontes says, "*Let be, let be*." REED.

[9] —pluck up, my heart, and be sad!] i. e. rouse thyself, my heart, and be prepared for serious consequences! STEEVENS.

[1] *Enter Dogberry*, &c.] In the old copies and all former editions, the entrance of Dogberry and his companions takes place before Claudio's speech, beginning "he is a giant;" but I think it is an obvious error. MALONE.

[2] —ne'er weigh more REASONS in her balance:] A quibble between *reasons* and *raisins*. RITSON.

D. Pedro. Officers, what offence have these men done?

Dogb. Marry, sir, they have committed false report; moreover, they have spoken untruths; secondarily, they are slanders; sixth and lastly, they have belied a lady; thirdly, they have verified unjust things: and, to conclude, they are lying knaves.

D. Pedro. First, I ask thee what they have done; thirdly, I ask thee what's their offence; sixth and lastly, why they are committed; and, to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

Claud. Rightly reasoned, and in his own division; and, by my troth, there's one meaning well suited [2].

D. Pedro. Who have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned constable is too cunning to be understood: What's your offence?

Bora. Sweet prince, let me go no further to mine answer; do you hear me, and let this count kill me. I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light; who, in the night, overheard me confessing to this man, how Don John your brother incensed me to slander [3] the lady Hero; how you were brought into the orchard, and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garments; how

[2] —one meaning well suited.] That is, *one meaning is put into many different dresses;* the Prince having asked the same question in four modes of speech. Johnson.

[3] — INCENSED me to slander, &c.] Instigated me. See Minsheu's Dict in v.

So, also, in The Winter's Tale:

"She had, and would incense me,
"To murder her I married."

and in many other passages. Malone.

The word is used in the same sense in Richard III. and Henry VIII. M. Mason.

you disgraced her, when you should marry her: my villainy they have upon record; which I had rather seal with my death, than repeat over to my shame: the lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain.

D. Pedro. Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

Claud. I have drunk poison, whiles he utter'd it.

D. Pedro. But did my brother set thee on to this?

Bora. Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it.

D. Pedro. He is compos'd and fram'd of treachery:—
And fled he is upon this villainy.

Claud. Sweet Hero! now thy image doth appear
In the rare semblance that I loved it first.

Dogb. Come, bring away the plaintiffs; by this time our Sexton hath reformed signior Leonato of the matter: And masters, do not forget to specify, when time and place shall serve, that I am an ass.

Verg. Here, here comes master signior Leonato, and the Sexton too.

Re-enter Leonato and Antonio, with the Sexton.

Leon. Which is the villain? Let me see his eyes;
That when I note another man like him,
I may avoid him: Which of these is he?

Bora. If you would know your wronger, look on me.

Leon. Art thou the slave, that with thy breath hast kill'd
Mine innocent child?

Bora. Yea, even I alone.

Leon. No, not so, villain; thou bely'st thyself;
Here stand a pair of honourable men,

A third is fled, that had a hand in it:—
I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death;
Record it with your high and worthy deeds;
'Twas bravely done, if you bethink you of it.

Claud. I know not how to pray your patience,
Yet I must speak: Choose your revenge yourself;
Impose me to what penance [4] your invention
Can lay upon my sin: yet sinn'd I not,
But in mistaking.

D. Pedro. By my soul, nor I;
And yet, to satisfy this good old man,
I would bend under any heavy weight
That he'll enjoin me to.

Leon. I cannot bid you bid my daughter live,
That were impossible; but, I pray you both,
Possess the people [5] in Messina here
How innocent she died: and, if your love
Can labour aught in sad invention,
Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb [6],
And sing it to her bones; sing it to-night:—
To-morrow morning come you to my house;
And since you could not be my son-in-law,

4 Impose me to what penance —] i. e. *command* me to undergo whatever penance, &c. A task or exercise prescribed by way of punishment for a fault committed at the Universities, is yet called (as Mr. Steevens has observed in a former note) an *imposition*.
Malone.

5 Possess the people, &c.] To *possess*, in ancient language, signifies, to *inform*, to *make acquainted with*. So, in The Merchant of Venice:

"Is he yet *possess'd* how much you would?"

Again, ibid.:

"I have *possess'd* your grace of what I purpose."
Steevens.

6 Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb,] C'est la coutume parmi les Catholiques d'attacher à quelque colonne, ou ailleurs, près du tombeau des morts, et surtout des morts de reputation, des inscriptions funebres en papier. La Monnoie en Bayle, au mot Aretin (Pierre), note G. Blakeway.

Be yet my nephew: my brother hath a daughter,
Almost the copy of my child that's dead,
And she alone is heir to both of us [7];
Give her the right you should have given her cousin,
And so dies my revenge.

Claud. O, noble sir,
Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me!
I do embrace your offer; and dispose
For henceforth of poor Claudio.

Leon. To-morrow then I will expect your coming;
To-night I take my leave.—This naughty man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret,
Who, I believe, was pack'd in all this wrong [8],
Hir'd to it by your brother.

Bora. No, by my soul, she was not;
Nor knew not what she did, when she spoke to me;
But always hath been just and virtuous,
In any thing that I do know by her.

Dogb. Moreover, sir, (which, indeed, is not under white and black,) this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me ass: I beseech you, let it be remembered in his punishment: And also, the watch heard them talk of one Deformed: they say, he

7 And she alone is heir to both of us;] Shakspeare seems to have forgot what he had made Leonato say, in the fifth scene of the first Act to Antonio: "How now, brother; where is my cousin your son? hath he provided the musick?" Anonymous.

8 Who, I believe, was PACK'D in all this wrong,] i. e. combined; an accomplice. So, in Lord Bacon's Works, vol. iv. p. 269, edit. 1740: "If the issue shall be this, that whatever shall be done for him, shall be thought done for a number of persons that shall be laboured and *packed* —." Malone.

So, in King Lear:

"—— snuffs and *packings* of the dukes." Steevens.

Again, in Melvill's Memoirs, p. 90: "— he was a special instrument of helping my Lord of Murray and Secretary Lidington to *pack* up the first friendship betwixt the two queens," &c. Reed.

wears a key in his ear, and a lock hanging by it [9]; and borrows money in God's name [1]; the which

9 — he wears a KEY IN HIS EAR, and a LOCK hanging by it;] There could not be a pleasanter ridicule on the fashion, than the constable's descant on his own blunder. They heard the conspirators satirize the *fashion;* whom they took to be a man surnamed *Deformed.* This the constable applies with exquisite humour to the courtiers, in a description of one of the most fantastical fashions of that time, the men's wearing rings in their ears, and indulging a favourite lock of hair, which was brought before, and tied with ribbons, and called a *love-lock*. Against this fashion William Prynne wrote his treatise, called, The Unlovelyness of Love-Locks. To this fantastick mode Fletcher alludes in his Cupid's Revenge: "This morning I brought him a new perriwig with *a lock at it*—And yonder's a fellow come has *bored a hole in his ear*." And again, in his Woman-Hater: "If I could endure an ear with a *hole* in it, or a platted *lock*," &c. WARBURTON.

Dr. Warburton, I believe, has here (as he frequently does) refined a little too much. There is no allusion, I conceive, to the fashion of wearing rings in the ears (a fashion which our author himself followed). The pleasantry seems to consist in Dogberry's supposing that the *lock* which *Deformed* wore, must have a key to it.

Fynes Moryson, in a very particular account that he has given of the dress of Lord Montjoy, (the rival, and afterwards the friend, of Robert, Earl of Essex,) says, that his hair was "thinne on the head, where he wore it short, except *a lock under his left eare*, which he nourished the time of this warre, [the Irish War, in 1599,] and being woven up, hid it in his neck under his ruffe." *Itinerary*, P. II. p. 45. When he was not on service, he probably wore it in a different fashion. The portrait of Sir Edward Sackville, Earl of Dorset, painted by Vandyck, (now at Knowle,) exhibits this lock with a large knotted ribband at the end of it. It hangs under the ear on the left side, and reaches as low as where the star is now worn by the knights of the garter.

The same fashion is alluded to in an epigram, quoted in a note on The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act II. Sc. I.:

"Or what he doth with such a horse-tail-*lock*," &c.

So, also, in Arden of Feversham, 1592:

"His chinne was bare, but on his upper lippe
"A mutchado, which he wound about his eare." MALONE.

1 ——and BORROWS money in GOD'S NAME;] i. e. is a common beggar. This alludes, with too much levity, to the 17th verse of the 19th chapter of Proverbs: "He that giveth to the poor, *lendeth unto the Lord*." STEEVENS.

he hath used so long, and never paid, that now men grow hard-hearted, and will lend nothing for God's sake: Pray you, examine him upon that point.

Leon. I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

Dogb. Your worship speaks like a most thankful and reverend youth; and I praise God for you.

Leon. There's for thy pains.

Dogb. God save the foundation[2]!

Leon. Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee.

Dogb. I leave an arrant knave with your worship; which, I beseech your worship, to correct yourself, for the example of others. God keep your worship; I wish your worship well; God restore you to health: I humbly give you leave to depart; and if a merry meeting may be wished, God prohibit it.—Come, neighbour.

[*Exeunt Dogberry, Verges, and Watch.*

Leon. Until to-morrow morning, lords, farewell.

Ant. Farewell, my lords; we look for you to-morrow.

D. Pedro. We will not fail.

Claud. To-night I'll mourn with Hero

[*Exeunt Don Pedro and Claudio.*

Leon. Bring you these fellows on; we'll talk with Margaret,
How her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow[3].

[*Exeunt.*

[2] God save the FOUNDATION!] Such was the customary phrase employed by those who received alms at the gates of religious houses. Dogberry, however, in the present instance, might have designed to say—"God save the *founder!*" STEEVENS.

[3] ——LEWD fellow.] *Lewd*, in this, and several other instances, has not its common meaning, but merely signifies—*ignorant*. So, in King Richard III. Act I. Sc. III.:

"But you must trouble him with *lewd* complaints."

Again, in the ancient metrical romance of the Sowdon of Babyloyne, MS:

SCENE II.

LEONATO'S GARDEN.

Enter BENEDICK *and* MARGARET, *meeting.*

BENE. Pray thee, sweet mistress Margaret, deserve well at my hands, by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

MARG. Will you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beauty?

BENE. In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living shall come over it; for, in most comely truth, thou deservest it.

MARG. To have no man come over me? why, shall I always keep below stairs[4]?

BENE. Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth, it catches.

"That witnessith both lerned and *lewde*."

Again, ibid.:

"He spared neither *lewde* ner clerke." STEEVENS.

[4] To have no man come over me? why, shall I always keep BELOW stairs?] I suppose every reader will find the meaning. JOHNSON.

Lest he should not, the following instance from Sir Aston Cockayne's Poems is at his service:

"But to prove rather he was not beguil'd,
"Her he *o'er-came*, for he got her with child."

And another, more apposite, from Marston's Insatiate Countess, 1613:

"Alas! when we are once o'the falling hand,
"A man may easily *come over* us." COLLINS.

Theobald with some probability reads—*above* stairs; yet *below* and *above* were not likely to be confounded either by the transcriber or compositor. There is danger in any attempt to reform a joke two hundred years old.

The sense, however, for which Mr. Theobald contends, may be restored by supposing the loss of a word; and that our author wrote—'Why, shall I always keep *men* below stairs?' i. e. never suffer them to come up into my bed-chamber, for the purposes of love. STEEVENS.

Marg. And your's as blunt as the fencer's foils, which hit, but hurt not.

Bene. A most manly wit, Margaret, it will not hurt a woman; and so, I pray thee, call Beatrice: I give thee the bucklers [5].

Marg. Give us the swords, we have bucklers of our own.

Bene. If you use them, Margaret, you must put in the pikes with a vice; and they are dangerous weapons for maids.

Marg. Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who, I think, hath legs. [*Exit Margaret.*

Bene. And therefore will come.

The god of love,
That sits above [6], [Singing.]

[5] —— I give thee the bucklers.] I suppose that *to give the bucklers* is, to *yield*, or to *lay by all thoughts of defence*, so *clypeum abjicere*. The rest deserves no comment. Johnson.

Greene, in his Second Part of Coney-Catching, 1592, uses the same expression: "At this his master laught, and was glad, for further advantage, to *yield the bucklers* to his prentise."

Again, in A Woman Never Vex'd, a comedy by Rowley, 1632: "—into whose hands she thrusts the weapons first, let him *take up the bucklers.*"

Again, in Decker's Satiromastix: "Charge one of them to *take up the bucklers* against that hair-monger Horace."

Again, in Chapman's May-Day, 1611:

"And now I lay *the bucklers* at your feet."

Again, in Every Woman in her Humour, 1609:

"—— if you lay down *the bucklers*, you lose the victory."

Again, in P. Holland's translation of Pliny's Natural History, b. x. ch. xxi.: "—it goeth against his stomach (the cock's) to yeeld the gantlet and *give the bucklers.*" Steevens,

[6] *The god of love*, &c.] This was the beginning of an old song, by W. E. (William Elderton) a puritanical parody of which, by one W. Birch, under the title of The Complaint of a Sinner, &c. Imprinted at London, by Alexander Lacy, for Richard Applow, is still extant. The words in this moralised copy are as follows:

"The God of love, that sits above,
"Doth know us, doth know us,
"How sinful that we be." Ritson.

In Bacchus' Bountie, &c. 4to. bl. l. 1593, is a song, beginning—

And knows me, and knows me,
How pitiful I deserve,—

I mean, in singing; but in loving,—Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first employer of pandars, and a whole book full of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the even road of a blank verse, why, they were never so truly turned over and over as my poor self, in love: Marry, I cannot show it in rhyme; I have tried; I can find out no rhyme to *lady* but *baby*, an innocent rhyme; for *scorn*, *horn*, a hard rhyme; for *school*, *fool*, a babbling rhyme; very ominous endings: No, I was not born under a rhyming planet, nor I cannot woo in festival terms [7].—

Enter BEATRICE.

Sweet Beatrice, would'st thou come when I called thee?

Beat. Yea, signior, and depart when you bid me.

Bene. O, stay but till then!

Beat. *Then*, is spoken; fare you well now:—and yet, ere I go, let me go with that I came for [8], which is, with knowing what hath passed between you and Claudio.

Bene. Only foul words; and thereupon I will kiss thee.

Beat. Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome; therefore I will depart unkissed.

Bene. Thou hast frighted the word out of his

" The gods of love
" Which raigne above." STEEVENS.

7 — in FESTIVAL TERMS.] i. e. in splendid phraseology, such as differs from common language, as holidays from common days. Thus, Hotspur, in King Henry IV. Part I.:

" With many *holiday* and lady *terms*." STEEVENS.

8 — with that I came FOR,] *For*, which is wanting in the old copy, was inserted by Mr. Rowe. MALONE.

right sense, so forcible is thy wit: But, I must tell thee plainly, Claudio undergoes my challenge [9]; and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will subscribe him a coward. And, I pray thee now, tell me, for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me?

Beat. For them all together; which maintained so politick a state of evil, that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them. But for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

Bene. *Suffer love;* a good epithet! I do suffer love, indeed, for I love thee against my will.

Beat. In spite of your heart, I think; alas! poor heart! If you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours; for I will never love that which my friend hates.

Bene. Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

Beat. It appears not in this confession: there's not one wise man among twenty, that will praise himself.

Bene. An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that lived in the time of good neighbours [1]: if a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument, than the bell rings, and the widow weeps.

Beat. And how long is that, think you?

Bene. Question?—Why, an hour in clamour, and a quarter in rheum [2]: Therefore it is most ex-

9 —UNDERGOES my challenge;] i. e. is subject to it. So, in Cymbeline, Act III. Sc. V.: "—*undergo* those employments, wherein I should have cause to use thee." STEEVENS.

1 —in the time of good neighbours:] i. e. when men were not envious, but every one gave another his due. The reply is extremely humorous. WARBURTON.

2 QUESTION?—Why, an hour, &c.] i. e. What a *question's* there, or what a foolish *question* do you ask? But the Oxford

pedient for the wise, (if Don Worm, his conscience, find no impediment to the contrary,) to be the trumpet of his own virtues, as I am to myself: So much for praising myself, (who, I myself will bear witness, is praise-worthy,) and now tell me, How doth your cousin?

Beat. Very ill.

Bene. And how do you?

Beat. Very ill too.

Bene. Serve God, love me, and mend: there will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste.

Enter Ursula.

Urs. Madam, you must come to your uncle; yonder's old coil at home [3]: it is proved, my lady Hero hath been falsely accused, the Prince and Claudio mightily abused; and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone: will you come presently?

Beat. Will you go hear this news, signior?

Bene. I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes; and, moreover, I will go with thee to thy uncle's. [*Exeunt.*

editor, not understanding this phrase, contracted into a single word, (of which we have many instances in English,) has fairly struck it out. Warburton.

The phrase occurs frequently in Shakspeare, and means no more than—*you ask a question*, or *that is the question*. Ritson.

[3] — old coil at home:] So, in King Henry IV. P. II. Act II. Sc. IV.: "By the mass, here will be *old* Utis." See note on this passage. *Old*, (I know not why,) was anciently a common augmentative in familiar language.

Coil is *bustle, stir*. So, in King John:

"I am not worth this *coil* that's made for me." Steevens.

SCENE III.

The Inside of a Church.

Enter Don PEDRO, CLAUDIO, *and Attendants, with musick and tapers.*

CLAUD. Is this the monument of Leonato?
ATTEN. It is, my lord.
CLAUD. [*Reads from a scroll.*]

Done to death[4] *by slanderous tongues*
Was the Hero that here lies:
Death, in guerdon[5] *of her wrongs*
Gives her fame which never dies:
So the life, that died with shame,
Lives in death with glorious fame.

Hang thou there upon the tomb, [affixing it.
Praising her when I am dumb.—
Now, musick, sound, and sing your solemn hymn.

SONG.

Pardon, Goddess of the night,
Those that slew thy virgin knight[6]*;*

[4] *Done to death*—] This obsolete phrase occurs frequently in our ancient writers. Thus, in Marlowe's Lust's Dominion, 1657:

"His mother's hand shall stop thy breath,
"Thinking her own son is *done to death*." MALONE.

Again, in the Argument to Chapman's version of the twenty-second Iliad:

"Hector (in Chi) *to death is done*
"By powre of Peleus angry sonne."

To *do to death* is merely an old translation of the French phrase —*Faire mourir*. STEEVENS

[5] —*in* GUERDON—] *Guerdon* is *reward, remuneration*. See Costard's use of this word in Love's Labour's Lost, Act III. Sc. I. The verb, to *guerdon*, occurs both in King Henry VI. Part II. and in King Henry VIII. STEEVENS.

[6] *Those that slew thy virgin* KNIGHT;] *Knight*, in its original

For the which, with songs of woe,
Round about her tomb they go.
Midnight, assist our moan;
Help us to sigh and groan,
Heavily, heavily:
Graves, yawn, and yield your dead,
Till death be uttered[7],
Heavily, heavily.

signification, means *follower*, or *pupil*, and in this sense may be feminine. Helena, in All's Well That Ends Well, uses *knight* in the same signification. JOHNSON.

Virgin knight is *virgin hero*. In the times of chivalry, a *virgin knight* was one who had as yet atchieved no adventure. Hero had as yet atchieved no matrimonial one. It may be added, that a *virgin knight* wore no device on his shield, having no right to any till he had deserved it.

So, in The History of Clyomon, Knight of the Golden Shield, &c. 1599:

"Then as thou seem'st in thy attire a *virgin knight* to be,
"Take thou this *shield* likewise *of white*," &c.

It appears, however, from several passages in Spenser's Fairy Queen, b. i. c. vii. that an *ideal order* of this name was supposed, as a compliment to Queen Elizabeth's virginity:

"Of doughtie knights whom faery land did raise
"That noble order hight of *maidenhed*."

Again, b. ii. c. ii.:

"Order of *maidenhed* the most renown'd."

Again, b. ii. c. ix.:

"And numbred be mongst knights of *maidenhed*."

On the books of the Stationers' Company in the year 1594, is entered, "Pheander the *mayden knight*." STEEVENS.

I do not believe that any allusion was here intended to those knights who had as yet atchieved no adventure. *Diana's knight* or *virgin knight*, was the common poetical appellation of virgins, in Shakspeare's time.

So, in The Two Noble Kinsmen, 1634:

"O sacred, shadowy, cold and constant queen,
"—— who to thy *female knights*
"Allow'st no more blood than will make a blush,
"Which is their order's robe—" MALONE.

[7] *Till death be uttered,*] I do not profess to understand this line, which to me appears both defective in sense and metre. I suppose two words have been omitted, which perhaps were—

'Till *songs* of death be uttered,' &c.

Claud. Now [8], unto thy bones good night!
Yearly will I do this rite.
D. Pedro. Good morrow, masters; put your torches out:
The wolves have prey'd; and look, the gentle day,
Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey:
Thanks to you all, and leave us; fare you well.
Claud. Good morrow, masters; each his several way.
D. Pedro. Come, let us hence, and put on other weeds;
And then to Leonato's we will go.
Claud. And, Hymen, now with luckier issue speeds,
Than this, for whom we render'd up this woe [9]!
[*Exeunt.*

So, in King Richard III.:
"Out on you, owls! nothing but *songs of death?*"
Steevens.

The metre of this line pronouncing *uttered* as a word of three syllables, is exactly the same as that of the one which precedes; the meaning is, 'till death be spoken of.' Boswell.

[8] Now, &c.] In the old copy these words by mistake are given to an attendant. Mr. Rowe made the correction now adopted. Malone.

[9] And, Hymen, now with luckier issue SPEEDS,
Than this, for whom we render'd up this woe!] Claudio could not know, without being a prophet, that this new proposed match should have any luckier event than that designed with Hero. Certainly, therefore, this should be a wish in Claudio; and, to this end, the poet might have wrote, *speed's;* i. e. *speed us:* and so it becomes a prayer to Hymen. Thirlby.

The contraction proposed is so extremely harsh, that I cannot believe it was intended by the author. Malone.

SCENE IV.

A Room in LEONATO's House.

Enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, BENEDICK, BEATRICE, URSULA, *Friar, and* HERO.

FRIAR. Did I not tell you she was innocent ?

LEON. So are the prince and Claudio, who accus'd her,
Upon the error that you heard debated :
But Margaret was in some fault for this ;
Although against her will, as it appears
In the true course of all the question.

ANT. Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.

BENE. And so am I, being else by faith enforc'd
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

LEON. Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all,
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves ;
And, when I send for you, come hither mask'd :
The prince and Claudio promis'd by this hour
To visit me :—You know your office, brother ;
You must be father to your brother's daughter,
And give her to young Claudio. [*Exeunt Ladies.*

ANT. Which I will do with confirm'd countenance.

BENE. Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.

FRIAR. To do what, signior ?

BENE. To bind me, or undo me, one of them.—
Signior Leonato, truth it is, good signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.

LEON. That eye my daughter lent her ; 'Tis most true.

BENE. And I do with an eye of love requite her.

LEON. The sight whereof, I think, you had from me,
From Claudio, and the prince ; But what's your will ?

Bene. Your answer, sir, is enigmatical:
But, for my will, my will is, your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoin'd
In the estate * of honourable marriage [1]:—
In which, good friar, I shall desire your help.
Leon. My heart is with your liking.
Friar. And my help.
Here comes the prince, and Claudio.

Enter Don Pedro and Claudio, with Attendants.

D. Pedro. Good morrow to this fair assembly.
Leon. Good morrow, prince; good morrow, Claudio;
We here attend you; Are you yet determin'd
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter?
Claud. I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiope.
Leon. Call her forth, brother, here's the friar ready. [*Exit Antonio.*
D. Pedro. Good morrow, Benedick: Why, what's the matter,
That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm, and cloudiness?
Claud. I think, he thinks upon the savage bull [2]:—
Tush, fear not, man, we'll tip thy horns with gold,
And all Europa shall rejoice at thee [3];

* Old copies, *state*.

[1] In the estate of honourable MARRIAGE;] *Marriage*, in this instance, is used as a trisyllable. So, in The Taming of the Shrew, Act III. Sc. II.:

"'Twere good, methinks, to steal our *marriage*." STEEVENS.

Why should it be a trisyllable here? Mr. Steevens, after cutting and clipping several hundred lines in order to avoid a verse of twelve syllables, would here introduce a "needless alexandrine." BOSWELL.

[2] — the SAVAGE BULL:] Still alluding to the passage quoted in a former scene from Kyd's Hieronymo. STEEVENS.

[3] And all EUROPA shall, &c.] I have no doubt but that our author wrote—

As once Europa did at lusty Jove,
When he would play the noble beast in love.
Bene. Bull Jove, sir, had an amiable low;
And some such strange bull leap'd your father's cow,
And got a calf in that same noble feat,
Much like to you, for you have just his bleat.

Re-enter Antonio, with the Ladies masked.

Claud. For this I owe you: here come other reckonings.
Which is the lady I must seize upon?
Ant. This same is she [4], and I do give you her.
Claud. Why, then she's mine: Sweet, let me see your face.
Leon. No, that you shall not, till you take her hand
Before this friar, and swear to marry her.
Claud. Give me your hand before this holy friar;
I am your husband, if you like of me.
Hero. And when I lived, I was your other wife:
[*Unmasking.*
And when you loved, you were my other husband.
Claud. Another Hero?
Hero. Nothing certainer:
One Hero died defil'd; but I do live,
And, surely as live, I am a maid.
D. Pedro. The former Hero! Hero that is dead!
Leon. She died, my lord, but whiles her slander lived.
Friar. All this amazement can I qualify;

'And all *our Europe*,' &c.
So, in King Richard II.:
" As were *our England* in reversion his." Steevens.

[4] *Ant.* This same, &c.] This speech is in the old copies given to Leonato. Mr. Theobald first assigned it to to the right owner. Leonato has in a former part of this scene told Antonio, that *he* " must be father to his brother's daughter, and *give her* to young Claudio." Malone.

When, after that the holy rites are ended,
I'll tell you largely of fair Hero's death:
Mean time, let wonder seem familiar,
And to the chapel let us presently.

Bene. Soft and fair, friar.—Which is Beatrice?

Beat. I answer to that name; [*Unmasking*]
What is your will?

Bene. Do not you love me?

Beat. Why no, no more than reason [5].

Bene. Why, then your uncle, and the prince, and Claudio,
Have been deceived: for they swore you did [6].

Beat. Do not you love me?

Bene. Troth no, no more than reason [7].

Beat. Why, then my cousin, Margaret, and Ursula,
Are much deceiv'd; for they did swear, you did.

Bene. They swore that you were almost sick for me.

Beat. They swore that you were well-nigh dead for me.

Bene. 'Tis no such matter:—Then, you do not love me?

Beat. No, truly, but in friendly recompense.

Leon. Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

Claud. And I'll be sworn upon't, that he loves her;

[5] No, no more than reason.] The old copies, injuriously to metre, read—"*Why* no," &c. It should seem that the compositor's eye had caught here the unnecessary adverb from the following speech. Steevens.

[6] — for they swore you did.] *For*, which both the sense and metre require, was inserted by Sir Thomas Hanmer. So, below:

"Are much deceiv'd; *for* they did swear you did."

Malone.

[7] No, no more than reason.] Here again the metre, in the old copies, is overloaded by reading—"*Troth*, no, no more," &c.

Steevens.

For here's a paper, written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashion'd to Beatrice.

HERO. And here's another,
Writ in my cousin's hand, stolen from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

BENE. A miracle! here's our own hands against our hearts!—Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

BEAT. I would not deny you;—but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion [8]; and, partly, to save your life, for I was told you were in a consumption.

BENE. Peace, I will stop your mouth [9].—

[*Kissing her.*

D. PEDRO. How dost thou, Benedick, the married man?

[8] I would NOT deny you, &c.] Mr. Theobald says, "is not this mock-reasoning? She would not deny him, but that she yields upon great persuasion. In changing the negative, I make no doubt but I have retrieved the poet's humour:" and so changes *not* into *yet*. But is not this a *mock-critic?* who could not see that the plain obvious sense of the common reading was this, 'I cannot find in my heart to deny you, but for all that I yield, after having stood out great persuasions to submission.' He had said—"I take thee for pity," she replies—"I would not deny thee," i. e. I take thee for pity too: but, as I live, I am won to this compliance by importunity of friends. Mr. Theobald, by altering *not* to *yet*, makes it supposed that *he* had been importunate, and that *she* had often denied, which was not the case. WARBURTON.

[9] *Bene.* Peace, I will stop your mouth. [*Kissing her.*] In former copies:

"*Leon.* Peace, I will stop your mouth."

What can Leonato mean by this? "Nay, pray, peace, niece! don't keep up this obstinacy of professions, for I have proofs to stop your mouth." The ingenious Dr. Thirlby agreed with me, that this ought to be given to Benedick, who, upon saying it, kisses Beatrice; and this being done before the whole company, how natural is the reply which the prince makes upon it?

"How dost thou, Benedick, the married man?"

Besides, this mode of speech, preparatory to a salute, is familiar to our poet in common with other stage-writers. THEOBALD.

Bene. I'll tell thee what, prince; a college of wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humour: Dost thou think, I care for a satire, or an epigram? No: if a man will be beaten with brains, he shall wear nothing handsome about him: In brief, since I do propose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it; and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it; for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion.—For thy part, Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee; but in that [1] thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised, and love my cousin.

Claud. I had well hoped, thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgelled thee out of thy single life, to make thee a double dealer; which out of question, thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look exceeding narrowly to thee.

Bene. Come, come, we are friends:—let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts, and our wives' heels.

Leon. We'll have dancing afterwards.

Bene. First, o' my word; therefore, play, musick.—
Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife: there is no staff more reverend than one tipped with horn [2].

[1] — in that —] i. e. because. So, Hooker: "Things are preached not *in that* they are taught, but *in that* they are published." Steevens.

[2] — no STAFF more reverend than one TIPPED WITH HORN.] This passage may admit of some explanation that I am unable to furnish. By accident I lost several instances I had collected for the purpose of throwing light on it. The following, however, may assist the future commentator.

MS. Sloan, 1691.

"THAT A FELLON MAY WAGE BATTAILE, WITH THE ORDER THEREOF.

"— by order of the lawe both the parties must at their owne

Enter a Messenger.

MESS. My lord, your brother John is ta'en in flight,
And brought with armed men back to Messina.

BENE. Think not on him till to-morrow; I'll devise thee brave punishments for him.—Strike up, pipers. [*Dance.*

[*Exeunt.*

charge be armed withoute any yron or long armoure, and theire heades bare, and bare-handed and bare-footed, every one of them having a *baston horned* at ech ende, of one length," &c.

Again, in Stowe's Chronicle, edit. 1615, p. 669: " — his baston a *staffe* of an elle long, made taper-wise, *tipt with horne*, &c. was borne after him." This instrument is also mentioned in the Sompnoure's Tale of Chaucer:

" His felaw had a *staf tipped with horn*." STEEVENS.

Mr. Steevens's explanation is undoubtedly the true one. The allusion is certainly to the ancient trial by *wager of battel*, in suits both criminal and civil. The quotation above given recites the form in the former case,—viz. an appeal of felony. The practice was nearly similar in civil cases, upon issue joined in a writ of right. Of the last trial of this kind in England, (which was in the thirteenth year of Queen Elizabeth,) our author might have read a particular account in Stowe's Annales. Henry Nailor, master of defence, was champion for the demandants, Simon Low and John Kyme; and George Thorne for the tenant, (or defendant,) Thomas Paramoure. The combat was appointed to be fought in Tuthill-fields, and the Judges of the Common Pleas and Serjeants at Law attended. But a compromise was entered into between the parties, the evening before the appointed day, and they only went through the forms, for the greater security of the tenant. Among other ceremonies Stowe mentions, that "the gauntlet that was cast down by George Thorne was borne before the sayd Nailor, in his passage through London, upon a sword's point, and his baston (a *staff* of an ell long, made taper-wise, *tipt with horn*,) with his shield of hard leather, was borne after him," &c. See also Minsheu's Dict. 1617, in v. Combat; from which it appears that Nailor on this occasion was introduced to the Judges, with "*three solemn congees*," by a very *reverend* person, "Sir Jerome Bowes, ambassador from Queen Elizabeth into Russia, who carried a red *baston* of an ell long, *tipped with horne*."—In a very ancient law-book entitled Britton, the manner in which the combatants are to be armed is particularly

mentioned. The quotation from the Sloanian MS. is a translation from thence. By a ridiculous mistake the words, "sauns lōge arme," are rendered in the modern translation of that book, printed a few years ago, "without *linen armour;*" and "a mains nues et pies" [bare-handed and bare-footed] is translated, "and their hands naked and *on foot*." MALONE.

Again, Britton, Pleas of the Crown, c. xxvii. f. 18: "Next let them go to combat armed without iron and without linnen armour, their heads uncovered and their hands naked, and on foot, with *two bastons tipped with horn* of equal length, and each of them a target of four corners, without any other armour, whereby any of them may annoy the other; and if either of them have any other weapon concealed about him, and therewith annoy his adversary, let it be done as shall be mentioned amongst combats in a plea of land." REED.

This play may be justly said to contain two of the most sprightly characters that Shakspeare ever drew. The wit, the humourist, the gentleman, and the soldier, are combined in Benedick. It is to be lamented, indeed, that the first and most splendid of these distinctions, is disgraced by unnecessary profaneness; for the goodness of his heart is hardly sufficient to atone for the licence of his tongue. The too sarcastic levity, which flashes out in the conversation of Beatrice, may be excused on account of the steadiness and friendship so apparent in her behaviour, when she urges her lover to risque his life by a challenge to Claudio. In the conduct of the fable, however, there is an imperfection similar to that which Dr. Johnson has pointed out in The Merry Wives of Windsor:—the second contrivance is less ingenious than the first:—or, to speak more plainly, the same incident is become stale by repetition. I wish some other method had been found to entrap Beatrice, than that very one which before had been successfully practised on Benedick.

Much Ado About Nothing, (as I undertand from one of Mr. Vertue's MSS.) formerly passed under the title of Benedick and Beatrix. Heming the player received, on the 20th of May, 1613, the sum of forty pounds, and twenty pounds more as his Majesty's gratuity, for exhibiting six plays at Hampton Court, among which was this comedy. STEEVENS.

Benedict. Like the old tale, it is not so, nor 'twas not so: but indeed God forbid it should be so.] I believe none of the commentators have understood this; it is an allusion, as the speaker says, to an *old tale*, which may perhaps be still extant in some collections of such things, or which Shakspeare may have heard, as I have, related by a great aunt, in his childhood.

The author is not famous for subtlety of plot. he has other excellencies which are not perhaps fully compatible with the ebicanary of invention. the most successful dramatic poets were content generally with history, or ordinary probability. for plots that came within their own observation: or by the deduction of natural effects from familiar causes. the ambition to surprise (as in the case of Dryden) carried with it a strain of poetry rarely natural, and sometimes absurd. In the present ca

Once upon a time, there was a young lady, (called Lady Mary in the story) who had two brothers. One summer they all three went to a country seat of theirs, which they had not before visited. Among the other gentry in the neighbourhood who came to see them, was a Mr. Fox, a batchelor, with whom they, particularly the young lady, were much pleased. He used often to dine with them, and frequently invited Lady Mary to come and see his house. One day that her brothers were absent elsewhere, and she had nothing better to do, she determined to go thither; and accordingly set out unattended. When she arrived at the house, and knocked at the door, no one answered. At length she opened it, and went in; over the portal of the hall was written "*Be bold, be bold, but not too bold:*" she advanced: over the stair-case, the same inscription: she went up: over the entrance of a gallery, the same: she proceeded: over the door of a chamber,—"*Be bold, be bold, but not too bold, lest that your heart's blood should run cold.*" She opened it; it was full of skeletons, tubs full of blood, &c. She retreated in haste; coming down stairs, she saw out of a window Mr. Fox advancing towards the house, with a drawn sword in one hand, while with the other he dragged along a young lady by her hair. Lady Mary had just time to slip down, and hide herself under the stairs, before Mr. Fox and his victim arrived at the foot of them. As he pulled the young lady up stairs, she caught hold of one of the *bannisters* with her hand, on which was a rich bracelet. Mr. Fox cut it off with his sword: the hand and bracelet fell into Lady Mary's lap, who then contrived to escape unobserved, and got home safe to her brother's house.

After a few days, Mr. Fox came to dine with them as usual (whether by invitation, or of his own accord, this deponent saith not). After dinner, when the guests began to amuse each other with extraordinary anecdotes, Lady Mary at length said, she would relate to them a remarkable dream she had lately had. I dreamt, said she, that as you, Mr. Fox, had often invited me to your house, I would go there one morning. When I came to the house, I knocked, &c. but no one answered. When I opened the door, over the hall was written, "*Be bold, be bold, but not too bold.*" But, said she, turning to Mr. Fox, and smiling, *It is not so, nor it was not so;* then she pursues the rest of the story, concluding at every turn with "*It is not so, nor it was not so,*" till she comes to the room full of dead bodies, when Mr. Fox took up the burden of the tale, and said, "*It is not so, nor it was not so, and God forbid it should be so:*" which he continues to repeat at every subsequent turn of the dreadful story, till she came to the circumstance of his cutting off the young lady's hand, when, upon his saying as usual, *It is not so, nor it was not so, and God forbid it should be so,* Lady Mary retorts, *But it is so,*

† Shakespeare may be justified - for simple and practical means are best adapted to simple Instruments - such as these fairy minds especially when employed to so sagacious a Lady as Beatrice, who must readily have detected any unnecessary or curious expedient in their management. It would have been besides more satisfactory if Fairies had shown their readers some more happy sentiments in the place of the sept - it may be doubted whether any can be found. -

and it was so, and here the hand I have to show, at the same time producing the hand and bracelet from her lap: whereupon the guests drew their swords, and instantly cut Mr. Fox into a thousand pieces.

Such is the *old tale* to which Shakspeare evidently alludes, and which has often "*froze my young blood*," when I was a child, as, I dare say, it had done his before me. I will not apologize for repeating it, since it is manifest that such *old wives' tales* often prove the best elucidation of this writer's meaning. BLAKEWAY.

— Hundred merry Tales ;] The book, to which Shakspeare alludes, might be an old translation of Les Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles. The original was published at Paris, in the black letter, before the year 1500, and is said to have been written by some of the royal family of France. Ames mentions a translation of it prior to the time of Shakspeare.

In The London Chaunticleres, 1659, this work, among others, is cried for sale by a ballad-man: "The Seven Wise Men of Gotham; a *Hundred Merry Tales*; Scoggin's Jests," &c.

Again, in The Nice Valour, &c. by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"—— the Almanacs,

"The *Hundred Novels*, and the Books of Cookery."

Of this collection there are frequent entries in the register of the Stationers' Company. The first I met with was in Jan. 1581.

STEEVENS.

This book was certainly printed before the year 1575, and in much repute, as appears from the mention of it in Laneham's Letter concerning the entertainment at Kenelworth-Castle. Again, in The English Courtier and the Cuntrey Gentleman, bl. l. 1586, sig. H 4: "—— wee want not also pleasant mad headed knaves that bee properly learned and well reade in diverse pleasant bookes and good authors. As Sir Guy of Warwicke, the Foure Sonnes of Aymon, the Ship of Fooles, the Budget of Demandes, the *Hundredth Merry Tales*, the Booke of Ryddles, and many other excellent writers both witty and pleasaunt." It has been suggested to me that there is no other reason than the word *hundred* to suppose this book a translation of the Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles. I have now but little doubt that Boccace's Decameron was the book here alluded to. It contains just one hundred Novels. So, in Guazzo's Civile Conversation, 1586, p. 158: "—— we do but give them occasion to turne over the *Hundred Novelles* of Boccace, and to write amorous and lascivious letters." REED.

Such were the guesses with which those most conversant in old English literature were obliged to content themselves; but it is now clearly ascertained that the *Hundred Merry Tales* was, as I have stated, a jest book of that time. A fragment of an early edition of a compilation of that kind, under the title mentioned by Beatrice, was discovered a few years ago, by my friend Mr.

Coneybeare, Professor of Poetry, in Oxford; which, by his permission, was published for the gratification of brother antiquaries. It must have appeared earlier than 1533, as it was from the press of John Rastell, who ceased to print in that year. Another work of the same nature, called "Tales and Quicke Answeres," perhaps of equal or nearly equal antiquity, has also been given to the publick. Scoggin's Jests, Tarleton's Jests, and Peele's Jests, show that this title was not always adhered to; but the *Hundred Merry Tales* continued for a long period to be the most popular name for collections of this sort. An hundred indeed seems to have been a favourite number with our ancestors even upon graver occasions, of which the celebrated Marquis of Worcester's Century of Inventions, may, out of a multitude, be mentioned as an instance. The quotation already given from The London Chaunticleres, will show that the *Hundred Merry Tales* was still hawked about among the common people as late as the middle of the seventeenth century; and I can close this account, as Dr. Farmer has done the disquisition on stewed prunes, by stating the price. In "The true State, of the Case, of John Butler, B. D. &c. treating of a Marriage dissolved and made null by Desertion, 1697;" the author maintains, and avows that he has carried into practice, a doctrine not unlike to that of Milton, in his Tractate of Divorce; although he does not appear to have been aware of his having had so illustrious a precursor. His notions on this subject having been controverted, he makes this angry reply to one of his antagonists: "I have collected thereout (i. e. from the work he answers) a centiloquy of lies, &c.: Had they been collected together as a little book I have seen when I was a school-boy, called *An Hundred Merry Tales*, perhaps it might have fetched *a penny a book*." BOSWELL.

HAMLET.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

THE original story on which this play is built, may be found in Saxo Grammaticus, the Danish historian. From thence Bellefo-rest adopted it in his collection of novels, in seven volumes, which he began in 1564, and continued to publish through succeeding years. From this work, The Hystorie of Hamblett, quarto, bl. l. was translated. I have hitherto met with no earlier edition of the play than one in the year 1604, though it must have been per-formed before that time, as I have seen a copy of Speght's edition of Chaucer, which formerly belonged to Dr. Gabriel Harvey, (the antagonist of Nash) who, in his own hand-writing, has set down Hamlet, as a performance with which he was well acquainted, in the year 1598. His words are these: "The younger sort take much delight in Shakspeare's Venus and Adonis; but his Lucrece, and his tragedy of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke, have it in them to please the wiser sort, 1598."

In the books of the Stationers' Company, this play was entered by James Roberts, July 26, 1602, under the title of "A booke called The Revenge of Hamlett, Prince of Denmarke, as it was lately acted by the Lord Chamberlain his servantes."

In Eastward Hoe, by George Chapman, Ben Jonson, and John Marston, 1605, is a fling at the Hero of this tragedy. A footman named Hamlet enters, and a tankard-bearer asks him—"'Sfoote, *Hamlet*, are you *mad?*"

The frequent allusions of contemporary authors to this play suf-ficiently show its popularity. Thus, in Decker's Bel-man's Night-walkes, 4to. 1612, we have—"But if any *mad Hamlet*, hearing this, smell villainie, and rush in by violence to see what the tawny diueils [gypsies] are dooing, then they excuse the fact," &c. Again, in an old collection of Satirical Poems, called The Night-Raven, is this couplet:

"I will not cry *Hamlet*, *Revenge* my greeves,
"But I will call Hangman, Revenge on thieves."

STEEVENS.

Surely no satire was intended in Eastward Hoe, which was acted at Shakspeare's own playhouse, (Blackfriers,) by the child-ren of the revels, in 1605. MALONE.

The following particulars relative to the date of this piece, are borrowed from Dr. Farmer's Essay on the Learning of Shakspeare, p. 85, 86, second edition:

"Greene, in the Epistle prefixed to his Arcadia, hath a lash at

some ‘ vaine glorious tragedians,’ and very plainly at Shakspeare in particular.—‘ I leave all these to the mercy of their *mother-tongue*, that feed on nought but the crums that fall from the *translators* trencher.—That could scarcely *latinize* their neck verse if they should have neede, yet English Seneca, read by candlelight yeelds many good sentences—hee will afford you whole *Hamlets*, I should say, *handfuls* of tragicall speeches.’—I cannot determine exactly when this Epistle was first published; but, I fancy, it will carry the original Hamlet somewhat further back than we have hitherto done: and it may be observed, that the oldest copy now extant, [the quarto 1604] is said to be ‘ enlarged to almost as much againe as it was.’ Gabriel Harvey printed at the end of the year 1592, ‘Foure Letters and certaine Sonnetts, especially touching Robert Greene:’ in one of which his Arcadia is mentioned. Now Nash’s Epistle must have been previous to these, as Gabriel is quoted in it with applause; and the Foure Letters were the beginning of a quarrel. Nash replied in ‘ Strange News of the intercepting certaine Letters, and a Convoy of Verses, as they were going *privilie* to victual the Low Countries, 1593.’ Harvey rejoined the same year in ‘ Pierce’s Supererogation, or a new Praise of the old Asse.’ And Nash again, in “ Have With You to Saffron Walden, or Gabriell Harvey’s Hunt is up;’ containing a full answer to the eldest sonne of the halter-maker, 1596.”—Nash died before 1606, as appears from an old comedy called The Return from Parnassus. STEEVENS.

A play on the subject of Hamlet had been exhibited on the stage before the year 1589, of which Thomas Kyd was, I believe, the author. On that play, and on the bl. l. Historie of Hamblet, our poet, I conjecture, constructed the tragedy before us. The earliest edition of the prose-narrative which I have seen, was printed in 1608, but it undoubtedly was a republication.

Shakspeare’s Hamlet, notwithstanding some circumstances mentioned in the preceding notes which seem to assign an earlier date to it, was written, if my conjecture be well founded, in 1600. See An Attempt to ascertain the Order of his Plays. MALONE.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark.

HAMLET[1], Son to the former, and Nephew to the present King.

POLONIUS, Lord Chamberlain.

HORATIO, Friend to Hamlet.

LAERTES, Son to Polonius.

VOLTIMAND, }
CORNELIUS, }
ROSENCRANTZ, } Courtiers.
GUILDENSTERN, }

OSRIC, a Courtier.

Another Courtier.

A Priest.

MARCELLUS, }
BERNARDO, } Officers.

FRANCISCO, a Soldier.

REYNALDO, Servant to Polonius.

A Captain. An Ambassador.

Ghost of Hamlet's Father.

FORTINBRAS, Prince of Norway.

GERTRUDE, Queen of Denmark, and Mother of Hamlet.

OPHELIA, Daughter of Polonius.

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Players, Grave-Diggers, Sailors, Messengers, and other Attendants.

SCENE, Elsinore.

[1] HAMLET,] i. e. *Amleth*. The *h* transferred from the end to the beginning of the name. STEEVENS.

HAMLET,

PRINCE OF DENMARK.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Elsinore. A Platform before the Castle.

Francisco on his Post. Enter to him Bernardo.

Ber. Who's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me[2]: stand, and unfold Yourself.

Ber. Long live the king[3]!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve[4]; get thee to bed, Francisco.

Fran. For this relief, much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night.

[2] — me:] i. e. *me* who am already on the watch, and have a right to demand the watch-word [as Mr. Jennens has remarked]. Steevens.

[3] Long live the king!] This sentence appears to have been the watch-word. Malone.

[4] 'Tis NOW struck twelve;] I strongly suspect that the true reading is—*new* struck, &c. So, in Romeo and Juliet, Act I. Sc I.:

"But *new* struck nine." Steevens.

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"But *new* struck nine." Steevens.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch [5], bid them make haste.

5 The RIVALS of my watch.] *Rivals* for *partners*. WARBURTON. So, in Heywood's Rape of Lucrece, 1636:

"*Tullia*. Aruns, associate him.

"*Aruns*. A *rival* with my brother," &c.

Again, in The Tragedy of Hoffman, 1637:

"And make thee *rival* in those governments."

Again, in Antony and Cleopatra, Act III. Sc. V.:

"—— having made use of him in the wars against Pompey, presently deny'd him *rivality*."

By *rivals* the speaker certainly means *partners* (according to Dr. Warburton's explanation,) or those whom he expected to watch with him. Marcellus had watched with him before; whether as a centinel, a volunteer, or from mere curiosity, we do not learn: but, which ever it was, it seems evident that his station was on the same spot with Bernardo, and that there is no other centinel by them relieved. Possibly Marcellus was an officer, whose business it was to visit each watch, and perhaps to continue with it some time. Horatio, as it appears, watches out of curiosity. But in Act I. Sc. II. to Hamlet's question,—"Hold you the watch to-night?" Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo, all answer,—"We do, my honour'd lord." The folio indeed, reads—*both*, which one may with great propriety refer to Marcellus and Bernardo. If we did not find the latter gentleman in such good company, we might have taken him to have been like Francisco whom he relieves, an honest but common soldier. The strange indiscriminate use of Italian and Roman names in this and other plays, makes it obvious that the author was very little conversant in even the rudiments of either language. RITSON.

Rival is constantly used by Shakspeare for a partner or associate. In Bullokar's English Expositor, 8vo. 1616, it is defined "*One that sueth for the same thing with another;*" and hence Shakspeare, with his usual licence, always uses it in the same sense of *one engaged in the same employment or office with another*. *Competitor*, which is explained by Bullokar by the very same words which he has employed in the definition of *rival*, is in like manner (as Mr. M. Mason has observed,) always used by Shakspeare for *associate*. See vol. iv. p. 61, n. 1.

Mr. Warner would read and point thus:

"If you do meet Horatio, and Marcellus
"The *rival* of my watch,—

because Horatio is a gentleman of no profession, and because, as he conceived, there was but one person on each watch. But there is no need of change. Horatio is certainly not an officer,

Enter HORATIO *and* MARCELLUS.

FRAN. I think, I hear them.—Stand, ho! Who is there *!

HOR. Friends to this ground.

MAR. And liegemen to the Dane.

FRAN. Give you good night.

MAR. O, farewell, honest soldier: Who hath reliev'd you?

FRAN. Bernardo hath my place. Give you good night. [*Exit* FRANCISCO.

MAR. Holla! Bernardo!

BER. Say. What, is Horatio there?

HOR. A piece of him [6]. *like him in some parts. Sal: Ep II: 79 of great. "a terrible subtle: murdering piece.—*

BER. Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.

HOR. What [7], has this thing appear'd again tonight?

BER. I have seen nothing.

MAR. Horatio says, 'tis but our fantasy;

* First folio, *Stand! Who's there.*

but Hamlet's fellow-student at Wittenberg: but as he accompanied Marcellus and Bernardo on the watch from a motive of curiosity, our poet considers him very properly as an *associate* with them. Horatio himself says to Hamlet in a subsequent scene—

"——This to me
"In dreadful secrecy impart they did,
"And *I with them* the third night *kept the watch*."

MALONE.

[6] *Hor.* A PIECE of him,] But why a *piece?* He says this as he gives his hand. Which direction should be marked.

WARBURTON.

"A piece of him," is, I believe, no more than a cant expression. It is used, however, on a serious occasion in Pericles:

"Take in your arms this *piece* of your dead queen."

STEEVENS.

[7] *Hor.* What, &c.] Thus the quarto 1604. STEEVENS.
These words are in the folio given to Marcellus. MALONE.

And will not let belief take hold of him,
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:
Therefore I have entreated him along,
With us to watch the minutes of this night [8];
That, if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes [9], and speak to it.
Hor. Tush! tush! 'twill not appear.
Ber. Sit down awhile;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we two nights have seen [1].
Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.
Ber. Last night of all,
When yon same star, that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course to illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself,
The bell then beating one,—

[8] — the minutes of this night:] This seems to have been an expression common in Shakspeare's time. I found it in one of Ford's plays, The Fancies Chaste and Noble, Act V.:

"I promise ere *the minutes of the night*." STEEVENS.

[9] — APPROVE our eyes,] Add a new testimony to that of our eyes. JOHNSON.

So, in King Lear:

"——this *approves* her letter,
"That she would soon be here," STEEVENS.

"He may *approve* our eyes," He may make good the testimony of our eyes; be assured by his own experience of the truth of that which *we* have related, in *consequence of having been eye-witnesses to it*. To *approve* in Shakspeare's age, signified to *make good*, or establish, and is so defined in Cawdrey's Alphabetical Table of Hard English Words, 8vo. 1604. So, in King Lear:

"Good king that must *approve* the common saw:
"Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st
"To the warm sun." MALONE.

[1] What we two nights have seen.] This line is by Sir Thomas Hanmer given to Marcellus, but without necessity. JOHNSON.

MAR. Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

Enter GHOST.

BER. In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

MAR. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio[2].

BER. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

HOR. Most like:—it harrows me[3] with fear, and wonder.

BER. It would be spoke to.

MAR. Speak to it, Horatio.

HOR. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee, speak.

MAR. It is offended.

[2] Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.] It has always been a vulgar notion that spirits and supernatural beings can only be spoken to with propriety or effect by persons of learning. Thus, Toby, in The Night-walker, by Beaumont and Fletcher, says:

" —— It grows still longer,
" 'Tis steeple-high now; and it sails away, nurse.
" Let's call the butler up, for *he speaks Latin*,
" *And that will daunt the devil.*"

In like manner the honest Butler in Mr. Addison's Drummer, recommends the Steward to speak *Latin* to the Ghost in that play.

REED.

Because the church service was in Latin. BOSWELL.

[3] —— it HARROWS me, &c.] To *harrow* is to conquer, to subdue. The word is of Saxon origin. So, in the old black letter romance of Syr Eglamoure of Artoys:

" He swore by him that *harrowed* hell."

Milton has adopted this phrase in his Comus:

" Amaz'd I stood, *harrow'd with* grief and *fear*."

STEEVENS.

Ber. See! it stalks away.
Hor. Stay: speak: speak I charge thee, speak.
Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.
Ber. How now, Horatio? you tremble, and look pale:
Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you of it?
Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.
Mar. Is it not like the king?
Hor. As thou art to thyself:
Such was the very armour he had on,
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle[4],
He smote the sledded[5] Polacks on the ice[6].
'Tis strange.

[4] —— an angry PARLE,] This is one of the affected words introduced by Lyly. So, in The Two Wise Men and all the Rest Fools, 1619: (by Chapman:)

"—— that you told me at our last *parle*." STEEVENS.

Mr. Steevens has stated no reason for thinking that *parle* was an affected word introduced by Lyly. It occurs in the Mirror for Magistrates. See Todd's Johnson's Dictionary. It is probably as old as the word *parlement*, which was formerly not confined to that exclusive sense which now belongs to it. The best instance I have met with it employed in its general meaning is in Hobbes's Translation of the fourth book of the Odyssey, which was intended to be serious:

"And now my child at sea is in a tub,
"And has no skill in fight or *parlament*." BOSWELL.

[5] —— sledded —] A *sled*, or *sledge*, is a carriage without wheels, made use of in the cold countries. So, in Tamburlaine, or the Scythian Shepherd, 1590:

"—— upon an ivory *sled*
"Thou shalt be drawn among the frozen poles."
STEEVENS.

[6] He smote the sledded POLACKS on the ice.] *Pole-ax* in the common editions. He speaks of a Prince of Poland whom he slew in battle. He uses the word *Polack* again, Act II. Sc. IV.
POPE.

Polack was, in that age, the term for an inhabitant of Poland:

Mar. Thus, twice before, and jump at this dead hour[7],

Polaque, French. As in F. Davison's translation of Passeratius's epitaph on Henry III. of France, published by Camden:

" Whether thy chance or choice thee hither brings,
" Stay, passenger, and wail the hap of kings.
" This little stone a great king's heart doth hold,
" Who rul'd the fickle French and *Polacks* bold:
" Whom, with a mighty warlike host attended,
" With trait'rous knife a cowled monster ended.
" So frail are even the highest earthly things!
" Go, passenger, and wail the hap of kings." JOHNSON.

Again, in The White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona, &c. 1612:

" —— I scorn him
" Like a shav'd *Polack*—." STEEVENS.

All the old copies have *Polax*. Mr. Pope and the subsequent editors read—*Polack;* but the corrupted word shows, I think, that Shakspeare wrote—*Polacks*. MALONE.

With *Polack* for *Polander*, the transcriber, or printer, might have no acquaintance; he therefore substituted *pole-ax* as the only word of like sound that was familiar to his ear. Unluckily, however, it happened that the *singular* of the latter has the same sound as the *plural* of the former. Hence it has been supposed that Shakspeare meant to write *Polacks*. We cannot well suppose that in a *parley* the King belaboured many, as it is not likely that provocation was given by more than one, or that on such an occasion he would have condescended to strike a meaner person than a prince. STEEVENS.

After all it is just possible that the old reading may be right. *Poleax* may, by a not uncommon figure, be put for the person who carried the *pole-axe*, a mark of rank among the Muscovites; as "the wry-necked *fife*," is used for *fifer;* or, as we should talk at this day, of *the gold stick in waiting*. "After that the same day he sent a great and glorious Duke, one of them that *held the golden pole-ax*, with his retinue, and sundry sorts of meath to drink merrily with the Ambassador." *Milton's Brief Hist. of Moscovia*. BOSWELL.

[7] —— JUMP at this dead hour,] So the 4to. 1604. The folio —*just*. STEEVENS.

The correction was probably made by the author. JOHNSON.

In the folio we sometimes find a familiar word substituted for one more ancient. MALONE.

Jump and *just* were synonymous in the time of Shakspeare. Ben Jonson speaks of verses made on *jump names*, i. e. names that suit exactly. Nash says—" and *jumpe* imitating a verse in As in præsenti." So, in Chapman's May Day, 1611:

" Your appointment was *jumpe* at three, with me."

With martial stalk, hath he gone by our watch.
Hor. In what particular thought to work[8], I
know not;
But, in the gross and scope[9] of mine opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.
Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that
knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land?
And why such daily cast[1] of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war;
Why such impress of shipwrights[2], whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week:
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint labourer with the day;
Who is't, that can inform me?
Hor. That can I;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,

Again, in M. Kyffin's translation of the Andria of Terence, 1588:

"Comes he this day so *jump* in the very time of this marriage?" Steevens.

[8] In what particular thought to work,] i. e. What particular train of thinking to follow. Steevens.

[9] —— gross and scope —] General thoughts, and tendency at large. Johnson.

[1] —daily cast —] The quartos read—*cost*. Steevens.

[2] Why such impress of shipwrights,] Judge Barrington, Observations on the more Ancient Statutes, p. 300, having observed that Shakspeare gives English manners to every country where his scene lies, infers from this passage, that in the time even of Queen Elizabeth, shipwrights as well as seamen were forced to serve. Whalley.

Impress signifies only the act of retaining shipwrights by giving them what was called *prest* money (from *pret*, Fr.) for holding themselves in *readiness* to be employed. Thus, Chapman, in his version of the second book of Homer's Odyssey:

"I, from the people straight, will *press* for you,
"*Free voluntaries* —."

See Mr. Douce's note on King Lear, Act IV. Sc. VI. Steevens.

Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on [3] by a most emulate pride,
Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him,)
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compáct,
Well ratified by law, and heraldry [4],
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands,
Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same co-mart,
And carriage of the article design'd [5],

3 Thereto PRICK'D on —] So, in Othello:

"*Pricked* to it by foolish honesty and love." BOSWELL.

4 — by law, and heraldry,] Mr. Upton says, that Shakspeare sometimes expresses one thing by two substantives, and that *law and heraldry* means, by the *herald law*. So, in Antony and Cleopatra, Act IV.:

"Where rather I expect victorious life,
"Than *death and honour*."

i. e. honourable death. STEEVENS.

Puttenham, in his Art of Poesie, speaks of *The Figure of Twinnes*: "*horses* and *barbes*, for *barbed horses*; *venim* and *dartes*, for *venimous dartes*," &c. FARMER.

"— law, and heraldry." That is, according to the forms of *law and heraldry*. When the right of property was to be determined by combat, the rules of *heraldry* were to be attended to, as well as those of *law*. M. MASON.

i. e. to be well ratified by the rules of law, and the forms prescribed *jure feciali*; such as proclamation, &c. MALONE.

5 — as, by the SAME CO-MART,
And carriage of the article design'd,] *Co-mart* signifies *a bargain*, and *carrying of the article*, the *covenant* entered into to confirm that bargain. Hence we see the common reading [*covenant*] makes a tautology. WARBURTON.

Thus the quarto 1604. The folio reads—"as by *the same covenant*:" for which the late editions have given us—"as by *that* covenant."

Co-mart is, I suppose, *a joint bargain*, a word perhaps of our poet's coinage. A *mart* signifying a great fair or market, he would not have scrupled to have written—*to mart*, in the sense of

His fell to Hamlet: Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unimproved mettle hot and full [5],
Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
Shark'd up a list of landless resolutes [6],
For food and diet, to some enterprize
That hath a stomach in't [7]: which is no other
(As it doth well appear unto our state,)
But to recover of us, by strong hand,
And terms compulsatory [8], those 'foresaid lands
So by his father lost: And this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations;
The source of this our watch; and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage [9] in the land.

to make a bargain. In the preceding speech we find *mart* used for *bargain* or *purchase.* MALONE.

He has not scrupled so to write in Cymbeline, Act I. Sc. VII.:

" —— to *mart*,
" As in a Romish stew," &c. STEEVENS.

" And *carriage* of the article *design'd*." *Carriage* is *import*; *design'd*, is *formed, drawn up between them.* JOHNSON.

Cawdrey in his Alphabetical Table, 1604, defines the verb *design* thus; "To marke out or appoint for any purpose." See also Minsheu's Dict. 1617: " To *designe* or shew by a token." *Designed* is yet used in this sense in Scotland. The old copies have *deseigne*. The correction was made by the editor of the second folio. MALONE.

[5] Of unimproved, &c.] " Full of unimproved mettle," is 'full of spirit not regulated or guided by knowledge or experience.' JOHNSON.

[6] SHARK'D up a list, &c.] I believe, to *shark up* means to *pick up without distinction*, as the *shark*-fish collects his prey. The quartos read *lawless* instead of *landless*. STEEVENS.

[7] That hath a STOMACH in't;] *Stomach*, in the time of our author, was used for *constancy, resolution*. JOHNSON.

[8] And terms COMPULSATORY,] Thus the quarto 1604. The folio—*compulsative*. STEEVENS.

[9] — romage —] Tumultuous hurry. JOHNSON.

Commonly written—*rummage*. I am not, however, certain that the word *romage* has been properly explained. The following passage in Hackluyt's Voyages, 1599, vol. ii. Ppp 3, seems indicative of a different meaning: " — the ships growne foule, *unroomaged*, and scarcely able to beare any saile," &c. Again, vol. iii. 88: " — the mariners were *romaging* their shippes," &c.

[*Ber.* I think [1], it be no other, but even so:
Well may it sort [2], that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch; so like the king
That was, and is, the question of these wars [3].

Hor. A mote it is [4], to trouble the mind's eye.

Romage, on shipboard, must have signified a scrupulous examination into the state of the vessel and its stores. Respecting land-service, the same term implied a strict inquiry into the kingdom, that means of defence might be supplied where they were wanted. STEEVENS.

Rummage, is properly explained by Johnson himself in his Dictionary, as it is at present daily used,—"to search for any thing." HARRIS.

[1] [I think, &c.] These, and all other lines, confined within crotchets, throughout this play, are omitted in the folio edition of 1623. The omissions leave the play sometimes better and sometimes worse, and seem made only for the sake of abbreviation.

JOHNSON.

It may be worth while to observe, that the title pages of the first quartos in 1604 and 1605, declare this play to be "enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect copy."

Perhaps, therefore, many of its absurdities, as well as beauties, arose from the quantity added after it was first written. Our poet might have been more attentive to the amplification than the coherence of his fable.

The degree of credit due to the title-page that styles the MS. from which the quartos 1604 and 1605 were printed, the "true and perfect copy," may also be disputable. I cannot help supposing this publication to contain all Shakspeare rejected, as well as all he supplied. By restorations like the former, contending booksellers or theatres might have gained some temporary advantage over each other, which at this distance of time is not to be understood. The patience of our ancestors exceeded our own, could it have out-lasted the tragedy of Hamlet as it is now printed; for it must have occupied almost five hours in representation. If, however, it was too much dilated on the ancient stage, it is as injudiciously contracted on the modern one.

STEEVENS.

[2] Well may it sort,] The cause and effect are proportionate and suitable. JOHNSON.

[3] —the QUESTION of these wars.] The theme or subject. So, in Antony and Cleopatra:

"—— You were the *word of war*." MALONE.

[4] A MOTE it is,] The first quarto reads—*a moth*. STEEVENS.

In the most high and palmy state of Rome [5],
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.

— — — — — — — — — — — —

As, stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun [6]; and the moist star [7],

A *moth* was only the old spelling of *mote*, as I suspected in revising a passage in King John, Act IV. Sc. I. where we certainly should read *mote*. MALONE.

5 — PALMY state of Rome,] *Palmy*, for *victorious*. POPE.
Mr. Rowe altered this poetical epithet to *flourishing*. BOSWELL.
"This tree [the *palm*] is of a most aspiring nature: it will beare no coales. It resisteth all burden, bearing it upward with his armes and boughes. Therefore it is an hyeroglyphick or emblem of victory or conquest." *Dyet's Dry Dinner*, by H. Buttes, 8vo. 1599. MALONE.

6 As, stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters IN the sun;] Mr. Rowe altered these lines, because they have insufficient connection with the preceding ones, thus:

"Stars *shone* with trains of fire, dews of blood *fell*,
"Disasters *veil'd* the sun ——."

This passage is not in the folio. By the quartos therefore our imperfect text is supplied; for an intermediate verse being evidently lost, it were idle to attempt a union that never was intended. I have therefore signified the supposed deficiency by a vacant space.

When Shakspeare had told us that *the grave stood tenantless*, &c. which are wonders confined to the earth, he naturally proceeded to say (in the line now lost) that *yet other prodigies appeared in the sky;* and these phænomena he exemplified by adding—*As* [i. e. as for instance] *Stars with trains of fire*, &c.

So, in King Henry IV. P. II.: "—to bear the inventory of thy shirts; *as*, one for superfluity," &c.

Again, in King Henry VI. P. III.:

"Two Cliffords, *as* the father and the son,
"And two Northumberlands;—"

Again, in The Comedy of Errors:

"They say, this town is full of cozenage;
"*As*, nimble jugglers that deceive the eye," &c.

"Disasters *dimm'd* the sun;" The quarto 1604 reads:

"Disasters *in* the sun ——."

The emendation was suggested by Mr. Capell. It is strongly supported not only by Plutarch's account in The Life of Cæsar,

Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
Was sick almost to dooms-day with eclipse,

["also the brightness of the *sunne* was *darkened*, the which, all that yeare through, rose very *pale*, and *shined not out*,"] but by various passages in our author's works. So, in The Tempest:

"——— I have *be-dimm'd*,
"The noon-tide *sun*."

Again, in King Richard II.:

"As doth the blushing discontented *sun*,—
"When he perceives the envious clouds are bent
"To *dim* his glory."

Again, in our author's 18th Sonnet:

"Sometimes too hot *the eye of heaven* shines,
"And often is his gold complexion *dimm'd*."

I suspect that the words *As stars* are a corruption, and have no doubt that either a line preceding or following the first of those quoted at the head of this note, has been lost: or that the beginning of one line has been joined to the end of another, the intervening words being omitted. That such conjectures are not merely chimerical, I have already proved. See Henry IV. Act IV. Sc. I. and Richard III. Act II. Sc. II.

The following lines in Julius Cæsar, in which the prodigies that are said to have preceded his death, are recounted, may throw some light on the passage before us:

"——— There is one within,
"Besides the things that we have heard and seen,
"Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.
"A lioness hath whelped in the streets;
"And graves have yawn'd and yielded up their dead:
"Fierce fiery warriors fight upon the clouds,
"In ranks, and squadrons, and right form of war,
"Which drizzled blood upon the capitol:
"The noise of battle hurtled in the air,
"Horses do neigh, and dying men did groan;
"And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets."

The lost words perhaps contained a description of *fiery warriors fighting on the clouds*, or of *brands burning bright beneath the stars*.

The 15th book of Ovid's Metamorphoses, translated by Golding, in which an account is given of the prodigies that preceded Cæsar's death, furnished Shakspeare with some of the images in both these passages:

"——— battels fighting in the clouds with crashing armour flew,
"And dreadful trumpets sounded in the ayre, and hornes eke blew,
"As warning men beforehand of the mischiefe that did brew;

And even [8] the like precurse of fierce events [9]—
As harbingers preceding still the fates,

" And Phœbus also looking *dim* did cast a drowsie light,
" Uppon the earth, which seemde likewise to be in sory plighte :
" From underneath beneath the starres brandes oft seemde
burning bright,
" It often rained drops of blood. The morning star look'd blew,
" And was bespotted here and there with specks of rustic hew.
" The moone had also spots of blood.—
" Salt teares from ivorie—images in sundry places fell ;—
" The dogges did howle, and every where appeared ghastly
sprights,
" And with an earthquake shaken was the towne."—

Plutarch only says, that " the sunne was darkened," that " diverse men were seen going up and down in fire ; " there were " fires in the element ; sprites were seene running up and downe " in the night, and solitarie birds sitting in the great market-place."

The disagreeable recurrence of the word *stars* in the second line induces me to believe that *As stars*, in that which precedes, is a corruption. Perhaps Shakspeare wrote :

' *Astres* with trains of fire,——
' ——— and dews of blood
' *Disasterous* dimm'd the sun.'

The word *astre* is used in an old collection of poems entitled Diana, addressed to the Earl of Oxenforde, a book of which I know not the date, but believe it was printed about 1580. In Othello we have *antres*, a word exactly of a similar formation.

MALONE.

The word—*astre*, (which is no where else to be found) was affectedly taken from the French by John Southern, author of the poems cited by Mr. Malone. This wretched plagiarist stands indebted both for his verbiage and his imagery to Ronsard. See the European Magazine, for June, 1788, p. 389. STEEVENS.

Mr. Jennens also, in his edition of Hamlet, 1773, conjectured, that a line had been lost, and suggested the following :

" Tremendous prodigies in heav'n appear'd." BOSWELL.

7 — and the MOIST STAR, &c.] i. e. the moon. So, in the Winter's Tale, Act I. Sc. II. :

" Nine changes of the *watry star* have been
" The shepherd's note."—

So, also, in Marlowe's Hero and Leander, 1598 :

" Not that night-wand'ring, pale, and *watry star*," &c.

MALONE.

8 And even —] Not only such prodigies have been seen in Rome, but the elements have shown our countrymen like forerunners and foretokens of violent events. JOHNSON.

And prologue to the omen coming on[1]—
Have heaven and earth together démonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.—]

Re-enter Ghost.

But, soft; behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me[2]—Stay, illusion!

9 —precurse of FIERCE events,] *Fierce*, for *terrible*.
WARBURTON.

I rather believe that *fierce* signifies *conspicuous, glaring*. It is used in a somewhat similar sense in Timon of Athens:

"O the *fierce* wretchedness that glory brings!"

Again, in King Henry VIII. we have "*fierce* vanities."
STEEVENS.

1 And PROLOGUE to the OMEN coming on,] But *prologue* and *omen* are merely synonymous here. The poet means, that these strange *phænomena* are prologues and forerunners of the events *presag'd*: and such sense the slight alteration which I have ventured to make, by changing *omen* to *omen'd*, very aptly gives.
THEOBALD.

Omen, for *fate*. WARBURTON.

Hanmer follows Theobald.

A distich from the life of Merlin, by Heywood, however, will show that there is no occasion for correction:

"Merlin well vers'd in many a hidden spell,
"His countries *omen* did long since foretell." FARMER.

Again, in The Vowbreaker:

"And much I fear the weakness of her braine
"Should draw her to some *ominous* exigent."

Omen, I believe, is *danger*. STEEVENS.

"And even the like *precurse* of fierce events,
"As *harbingers* preceding still the fates,
"And prologue to the *omen* coming on." So, in one of our author's poems:

"But thou shrieking *harbinger*,
"Foul *precurrer* of the fiend,
"*Augur* of the fever's end," &c.

"The omen coming on" is, *the approaching dreadful and portentous event*. So, in King Richard III.:

"Thy name is *ominous* to children."

i. e. (not boding ill fortune, but) *destructive* to children.

Again, *ibidem*:

"O Pomfret, Pomfret, O, thou bloody prison,
"Fatal and *ominous* to noble peers." MALONE.

2 I'll cross it, though it blast me.] The person who crossed the

If thou hast any sound [3], or use of voice,
Speak to me:
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me:
If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak!
Or, if thou hast uphoarded [4] in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you * spirits oft walk in death,
[*Cock crows*
Speak of it:—stay, and speak.—Stop it, Marcellus.
Mar. Shall I strike at it † with my partizan?
Hor. Do, if it will not stand [5].

* Quarto, *your.* † Quarto, *strike it.*

spot on which a spectre was seen, became subjected to its malignant influence. Among the reasons given in a curious paper, printed in the third volume of Mr. Lodge's Illustrations of British History, p. 48, for supposing the young earl of Derby (Ferdinando, who died April, 1594,) to have been bewitched, is the following: "On Friday there appeared a tall man *who twice crossed him swiftly;* and when the earl came to the place where he saw this man, he first fell sick." Blakeway.

[3] If thou hast any sound,] The speech of Horatio to the spectre is very elegant and noble, and congruous to the common traditions of the causes of apparitions. Johnson.

[4] Or, if thou hast uphoarded, &c.] So, in Decker's Knight's Conjuring, &c. "—If any of them had bound the spirit of gold by any charmes *in caves*, or in iron fetters *under the ground*, they should *for their own soules quiet* (*which questionlesse else would whine up and down*) if not for the good of their children, release it." Steevens.

[5] — Stop it, Marcellus.——

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.] I am unwilling to suppose that Shakspeare could appropriate these absurd effusions to Horatio, who is a scholar, and has sufficiently proved his good understanding by the propriety of his addresses to the phantom. Such a man therefore must have known that—

"As easy might he the intrenchant air
"With his keen sword impress,"

as commit any act of violence on the royal shadow. The words

Ber. 'Tis here!
Hor. 'Tis here!
Mar. 'Tis gone! [*Exit Ghost.*
We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable [6],
And our vain blows malicious mockery.
Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.
Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn [7],

—*Stop it, Marcellus.*—and *Do, if it will not stand*—better suit the next speaker, Bernardo, who, in the true spirit of an unlettered officer, *nihil non arroget armis*. Perhaps the first idea that occurs to a man of this description, is to strike at what offends him. Nicholas Poussin, in his celebrated picture of the Crucifixion, has introduced a similar occurrence. While lots are casting for the sacred vesture, the graves are giving up their dead. This prodigy is perceived by one of the soldiers, who instantly grasps his sword, as if preparing to defend himself, or resent such an invasion from the other world.

The two next speeches—*'Tis here!*—*'Tis here!*—may be allotted to Marcellus and Bernardo; and the third—*'Tis gone!* &c. to Horatio, whose superiority of character indeed seems to demand it.—As the text now stands, Marcellus proposes to strike the Ghost with his partizan, and yet afterwards is made to descant on the indecorum and impotence of such an attempt.

The names of speakers have so often been confounded by the first publishers of our author, that I suggest this change with less hesitation than I should express concerning any conjecture that could operate to the disadvantage of his words or meaning.—Had the assignment of the old copies been such, would it have been thought liable to objection? Steevens.

[6] —it is, as THE AIR, INVULNERABLE,] So, in Macbeth:

"As easy may'st thou the *intrenchant air*
"With thy keen sword impress."

Again, in King John:

"Against the *invulnerable clouds* of heaven." Malone.

[7] The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,] So, the quarto 1604. Folio—"to the *day*."

In England's Parnassus, 8vo. 1600, I find the two following lines ascribed to Drayton, but know not in which of his poems they are found:

Spenser 7. 272

Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day! and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air [8],

"And now the *cocke, the morning's trumpeter,*
"Play'd huntsup for the day-star to appear."

Mr. Gray has imitated our poet:

"The *cock's* shrill *clarion,* or the echoing horn,
"No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed." MALONE.

Our Cambridge poet was more immediately indebted to Phillips's Cider, b. i. 753:

"When Chanticleer, with *clarion shrill,* recalls
"The tardy day.—"

Thus also, Spenser, in his Fairy Queen, b. i. c. ii. s. 1:

"And cheerful *Chanticleer with his note shrill.*" STEEVENS.

[8] Whether in sea, &c.] According to the pneumatology of that time, every element was inhabited by its peculiar order of spirits, who had dispositions different, according to their various places of abode. The meaning therefore is, that all *spirits extravagant,* wandering out of their element, whether aërial spirits visiting earth, or earthly spirits ranging the air, return to their station, to their proper limits in which they are *confined.* We might read:

"——And at his warning
"Th' extravagant and erring spirit hies
"To his confine, whether in sea or air,
"Or earth, or fire. And of," &c.

But this change, though it would smooth the construction, is not necessary, and, being unnecessary, should not be made against authority. JOHNSON.

A Chorus in Andreini's drama, called Adamo, written in 1613, consists of spirits of fire, air, water, and hell, or subterraneous, being the exiled angels. "Choro di Spiriti ignei, aerei, acquatici, ed infernali," &c. These are the demons to which Shakspeare alludes. These spirits were supposed to controul the elements in which they respectively resided; and when formally invoked or commanded by a magician, to produce tempests, conflagrations, floods, and earthquakes. For thus says The Spanish Mandeville of Miracles, &c. 1600: "Those which are in the middle region of the ayre, and those that are under them nearer the earth, are those, which sometimes out of the ordinary operation of nature doe moove the windes with greater fury than they are accustomed; and do, out of season, congeele the cloudes, causing it to thunder, lighten, hayle, and to destroy the grasse, corne, &c. &c.——Witches and negromancers worke many such like things by the help of those spirits," &c. *Ibid.* Of this school therefore was Shakspeare's Prospero in The Tempest.

T. WARTON.

The extravagant [9] and erring spirit [1] hies
To his confíne: and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock [2].
Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,

Bourne of Newcastle, in his Antiquities of the Common People, informs us, "It is a received tradition among the vulgar, that at the time of cock-crowing, the midnight spirits forsake these lower regions, and go to their proper places.—Hence it is, (says he) that in country places, where the way of life requires more early labour, they always go chearfully to work at that time; whereas if they are called abroad sooner, they imagine every thing they see a wandering ghost." And he quotes on this occasion, as all his predecessors had done, the well-known lines from the first hymn of Prudentius. I know not whose translation he gives us, but there is an old one by Heywood. The *pious chansons*, the *hymns* and *carrols*, which Shakspeare mentions presently, were usually copied from the elder Christian poets.

FARMER.

9 The extravagant —] i. e. got out of his bounds.

WARBURTON.

So, in Nobody and Somebody, 1598: "—— they took me up for a *'stravagant*."

Shakspeare imputes the same effect to "Aurora's harbinger" in the last scene of the third Act of the Midsummer Night's Dream. See vol. v. p. 281, n. 2. STEEVENS.

1 — ERRING spirit,] *Erring* is here used in the sense of *wandering*. Thus, in Chapman's version of the fourth book of Homer's Odyssey, Telemachus calls Ulysses—

"My *erring* father—."

And in the ninth book, Ulysses, describing himself and his companions to the Cyclop, says—

"—— *Erring* Grecians we,
"From Troy were turning homewards—."

Erring, in short, is *erraticus*. STEEVENS.

2 It faded on the crowing of the cock.] This is a very ancient superstition. Philostratus, giving an account of the apparition of Achilles' shade to Apollonius Tyaneus, says that it vanished with a little glimmer as soon as the *cock crowed*. *Vit. Apol.* iv. 16.

STEEVENS.

Faded has here its original sense; it *vanished*. *Vado*, Lat. So, in Spenser's Fairy Queen, book i. c. v. st. 15:

"He stands amazed how he thence should *fade*."

This * bird of dawning singeth all night long:
And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad [3];
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes [4], nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the † time.

Hor. So have I heard, and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill [5]:
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet: for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him:

* First folio, *The*. † Quarto, *that*.

That our author uses the word in this sense, appears from the following lines:

" —— The morning *cock crew* loud;
" And at the sound it shrunk in haste away;
" And *vanish'd* from our sight." Malone.

3 — DARES STIR abroad;] Thus the quarto. The folio reads—" can walk." Steevens.

Spirit was formerly used as a monosyllable: *sprite*. The quarto 1604, has—" *dare* stir abroad." Perhaps Shakspeare wrote—' no *spirits* dare stir abroad.' The necessary correction was made in a late quarto of no authority, printed in 1637. Malone.

4 No fairy TAKES,] No fairy *strikes* with lameness or diseases. This sense of *take* is frequent in this author. Johnson.

So, in The Merry Wives of Windsor:

" And there he blasts the tree, and *takes* the cattle."

Steevens.

5 — high EASTERN hill:] The old quarto has it better *eastward*. Warburton.

The superiority of the latter of these readings is not, to me at least, very apparent. I find the former used in Lingua, &c. 1607:

" —— and overclimbs
" Yonder gilt *eastern* hills."

Again, in Browne's Britannia's Pastorals, book iv. sat. iv. p. 75, edit. 1616:

" And ere the sunne had clymb'd the *eastern hils*."

Again, in Chapman's version of the thirteenth book of Homer's Odyssey:

" —— Ulysses still
" An eye directed to the *eastern hill*."

Eastern and *eastward*, alike signify *toward the east*. Steevens.

Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Mar. Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most convenient. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The Same. A Room of State in the Same.

Enter the King, Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes, Voltimand, Cornelius, Lords, and Attendants.

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green; and that it us befitted [6]
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe;
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime * sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress of † this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy,—
With one auspicious, and one dropping eye [7];

* First folio, *sometimes*. † Quarto, *to*.

[6] — and THAT IT us befitted —] Perhaps our author elliptically wrote

'— and us befitted —'

i. e. and *that it* befitted us. STEEVENS.

[7] With ONE auspicious, and ONE dropping eye;] Thus the folio. The quarto, with somewhat less of quaintness:

"With *an* auspicious and *a* dropping eye."

The same thought, however, occurs in The Winter's Tale: "She had *one eye* declined for the loss of her husband; *another* elevated that the oracle was fulfilled."

After all, perhaps, we have here only the ancient proverbial phrase—"To cry with one eye and laugh with the other," buck-

With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along:—For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,—
Holding a weak supposal of our worth;
Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued with this * dream of his advantage [8],
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bands † of law,
To our most valiant brother.—So much for him.
Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting.

* First folio, *the*. † First folio, *bonds*.

ram'd by our author for the service of tragedy. See Ray's Collection, edit. 1768, p, 188. STEEVENS.

Dropping in this line probably means *depressed* or *cast downwards*: an interpretation which is strongly supported by the passage already quoted from The Winter's Tale. It may, however, signify *weeping*. "*Dropping* of the eyes" was a technical expression in our author's time.—"If the spring be wet with much south wind,—the next summer will happen agues and blearness, *dropping of the eyes*, and pains of the bowels." *Hopton's Concordance of Years*, 8vo. 1616.

Again, in Montaigne's Essays, 1603: "— they never saw any man there—with eyes *dropping*, or crooked and stooping through age."

The reason of the change pointed out by Mr. Steevens was probably this: '*an* auspicious and *a* dropping eye might be one and the same;' the alteration marks them to be different. MALONE.

[8] COLLEAGUED with this dream of his advantage,] The meaning is,—'He goes to war so indiscreetly, and unprepared, that he has no allies to support him but a *dream*, with which he is *colleagued* or *confederated*. WARBURTON.

Mr. Theobald, in his Shakspeare Restored, proposed to read—*collogued*, but in his edition very properly adhered to the ancient copies. MALONE.

"This dream of his advantage" (as Mr. Mason observes) means only 'this imaginary advantage, which Fortinbras hoped to derive from the unsettled state of the kingdom.' STEEVENS.

Thus much the business is: We have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
His further gait herein[9]; in that the levies,
The lists, and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject:—and we here despatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers * of this greeting to old Norway;
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king, more than the scope[1]
Of these dilated articles[2] allow.
Farewell; and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor. Vol. In that, and all things, will we show our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing; heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?

* First folio, *bearing*.

9 — to suppress
His further GAIT herein,] *Gate* or *gait* is here used in the northern sense, for *proceeding*, *passage*; from the A. S. verb *gae*. A *gate* for a *path*, *passage*, or *street*, is still current in the north. PERCY.

So, in A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Act V. Sc. II.:

"Every fairy take his *gait*." HARRIS.

1 — more than the scope —] More is comprized in the general design of these articles, which you may explain in a more diffused and dilated style. JOHNSON.

2 — these DILATED articles ALLOW.] i. e. the articles when dilated. MUSGRAVE.

The poet should have written *allows*. Many writers fall into this error, when a plural noun immediately precedes the verb; as I have had occasion to observe in a note on a controverted passage in Love's Labour's Lost. So, in Julius Cæsar:

"The *posture* of your *blows are* yet unknown."

Again, in Cymbeline: "— and the *approbation* of *those are* wonderfully to extend him," &c. MALONE.

Surely, all such defects in our author, were merely the errors of illiterate transcribers or printers. STEEVENS.

You told us of some suit; What is't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
And lose your voice: What would'st thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father[3].
What would'st thou have, Laertes?

Laer. My dread lord*,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation;
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

* First folio, *Dread my lord.*

[3] The HEAD is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.] The sense seems to be this: The head is not formed to be more useful to the heart, the hand is not more at the service of the mouth, than my power is at your father's service. That is, he may command me to the utmost, he may do what he pleases with my kingly authority. STEEVENS.

By *native to the heart*, Dr. Johnson understands, "natural and congenial to it, born with it, and co-operating with it."

Formerly the heart was supposed the seat of wisdom; and hence the poet speaks of the close connection between the heart and *head*. So, in Coriolanus, Act I. Sc. I.:

"Even to the court, the heart—to the seat of the brain."

See the note on that passage. MALONE.

We meet with a thought resembling this in Much Ado About Nothing:

"—— I will deal in this
"As secretly, and justly, as your soul
"Should with your body." BOSWELL.

I OL. He hath, my lord, [wrung from me my slow leave[4],
By laboursome petition; and, at last,
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:]
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

KING. Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces: spend it at thy will[5].—
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,——

HAM. A little more than kin, and less than kind[6].

[*Aside.*

[4] — wrung from me my slow leave,] These words and the two following lines are omitted in the folio. MALONE.

[5] Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces: spend it at thy will.] The sense is,—You have my leave to go, Laertes; make the fairest use you please of your time, and spend it at your will with the fairest graces you are master of. THEOBALD.

So, in King Henry VIII.:

" —— and bear the inventory
" Of your *best graces* in your mind." STEEVENS.

I rather think this line is in want of emendation. I read:

——— time is thine,
And *my* best graces: spend it at thy will. JOHNSON.

[6] *Ham.* A little more than KIN, and less than KIND.] *Kind* is the Teutonick word for *child*. Hamlet therefore answers with propriety, to the titles of *cousin* and *son*, which the king had given him, that he was somewhat more than *cousin*, and less than *son*. JOHNSON.

In this line, with which Shakspeare introduces Hamlet, Dr. Johnson has perhaps pointed out a nicer distinction than it can justly boast of. To establish the sense contended for, it should have been proved that *kind* was ever used by any English writer for *child*. " A little more than *kin*," is a little more than a common relation. The King was certainly something " less than *kind*," by having betrayed the mother of Hamlet into an indecent and incestuous marriage, and obtained the crown by means which he suspects to be unjustifiable. In the fifth Act, the prince accuses his uncle of having " popp'd in between the election and his hopes," which obviates Dr. Warburton's objection to the old reading, viz. that " the king had given no occasion for such a reflection."

A jingle of the same sort is found in Mother Bombie, 1594, and seems to have been proverbial, as I have met with it more than once: " — the nearer we are in blood, the further we must

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord, I am too much i'the sun [7].

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted * colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not, for ever, with thy vailed lids [8]

* First folio, *Nightly*.

be from love; the greater the *kindred* is, the less the *kindness* must be."

Again, in Gorboduc, a tragedy, 1561:

"In kinde a father, but not *kindelyness*."

In the Battle of Alcazar, 1594, Muly Mahomet is called "Traitor to *kinne* and *kinde*."

As *kind*, however, signifies *nature*, Hamlet may mean that his relationship was become an *unnatural* one, as it was partly founded upon incest. Our author's Julius Cæsar, Antony and Cleopatra, King Richard II., and Titus Andronicus, exhibit instances of *kind* being used for *nature*; and so too in this play of Hamlet, Act II. Sc. the last:

"Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, *kindless* villain."

Dr. Farmer, however, observes that *kin* is still used for *cousin* in the midland counties. Steevens.

Hamlet does not, I think, mean to say, as Mr. Steevens supposes, that *his uncle* is a little more than kin, &c. The King had called the Prince—"My cousin Hamlet, and my son."—His reply, therefore, is,—'I am a little more than thy kinsman, [for I am thy step-son;] and somewhat less than kind to thee, [for I hate thee, as being the person who has entered into an incestuous marriage with my mother.]' Or, if we understand *kind* in its ancient sense, then the meaning will be,—'I am more than thy kinsman, for I am thy step-son;' being such, "I am less near to thee than thy natural offspring," and therefore not entitled to the appellation of *son*, which you have now given me.

Malone.

7 — too much i'the sun.] He perhaps alludes to the proverb, "Out of heaven's blessing into the warm sun." Johnson.

Meaning probably his being sent for from his studies to be exposed at his uncle's marriage as his *chiefest courtier*, &c.

Steevens.

I question whether a quibble between *sun* and *son* be not here intended. Farmer.

In the quarto the word is spelt *sonne*. Boswell.

Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st, 'tis common; all, that live, must die[9].
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not seems.

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother *,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief[1],
That can denote me truly: These, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within, which passeth show;
These, but the trappings and the suits of woe[3].

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,

* Quarto, *cool mother*.

[8] — vailed lids —] With lowering eyes, cast down eyes. JOHNSON.

So, in The Merchant of Venice:

"*Vailing* her high-top lower than her ribs." STEEVENS.

[9] Thou know'st, 'tis common; all, that live, must die.] Perhaps the semicolon placed in this line, is improper. The sense, elliptically expressed, is,—Thou knowest it is common *that* all that live, must die.—The first *that* is omitted for the sake of metre, a practice often followed by Shakspeare. STEEVENS.

[1] — SHOWS of grief,] Thus the folio. The first quarto reads—*chapes*—I suppose, for *shapes*. STEEVENS.

It is *shapes* in the subsequent quartos; and this reading is adopted by Mr. Capell. BOSWELL.

[2] But I have that within, which passeth show;
These, but the trappings and the suits of woe.] So, in King Richard II.:

"—— my grief lies all within;
"And these external manners of lament
"Are merely shadows to the unseen grief
"That swells with silence in the tortur'd soul." MALONE.

To give these mourning duties to your father:
But, you must know, your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his [3]; and the survivor bound
In filial obligation, for some term
To do obsequious sorrow [4]: But to persever
In obstinate condolement [5], is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief:
It shows a will most incorrect [6] to heaven;

[3] — your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his;] Mr. Pope judiciously corrected the faulty copies thus:

"——your father lost a father;
"That father, his ——."

On which the editor Mr. Theobald thus descants:—"This supposed refinement is from Mr. Pope, but all the editions else, that I have met with, old and modern, read:"

"That father lost, *lost* his ——."

"The reduplication of which word here gives an energy and an elegance, *which is much easier to be conceived than explained in terms.*" I believe so: for when *explained in terms* it comes to this:—That father after he had lost himself, lost his father. But the reading is *ex fide codicis*, and that is enough. WARBURTON.

I do not admire the repetition of the word, but it has so much of our author's manner, that I find no temptation to recede from the old copies. JOHNSON.

The meaning of the passage is no more than this,—*Your father lost a father*, i. e. your grandfather, which *lost grandfather* also lost his father.

The metre, however, in my opinion, shows that Mr. Pope's correction should be adopted. The sense, though elliptically expressed, will still be the same. STEEVENS.

[4] — OBSEQUIOUS sorrow:] *Obsequious* is here from *obsequies*, or *funeral ceremonies*. JOHNSON.

So, in Titus Andronicus:

"To shed *obsequious* tears upon his trunk." STEEVENS.

So, in Richard III.:

"Whilst I a while *obsequiously* lament." MALONE.

[5] In obstinate CONDOLEMENT,] *Condolement*, for *sorrow*. WARBURTON.

[6] — a will most INCORRECT —] *Incorrect*, for *untutored*. WARBURTON.

Incorrect does not mean *untutored*, as Warburton explains it; but *ill-regulated*, not *sufficiently subdued*. M. MASON.

Not sufficiently regulated by a sense of duty and submission to the dispensations of Providence. MALONE.

A heart unfortified, or mind impatient;
An understanding simple and unschool'd:
For what, we know, must be, and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
Take it to heart? Fye! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd [7]; whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse, till he that died to-day,
This must be so. We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe [8]; and think of us
As of a father: for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne;
And, with no less nobility of love [9]
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you [1]. For your intent

[7] To REASON most absurd;] *Reason* is here used in its common sense, for the *faculty* by which we form conclusions from arguments. JOHNSON.

[8] — UNPREVAILING woe.] *Unprevailing* was anciently used in the sense of *unavailing*. Dryden, in his Essay on Dramatick Poetry, employs *prevail* for *avail*: "He may often *prevail* himself of the same advantages in English." So, in his Absalom and Achitophel, 1st edition:

"*Prevail* yourself of what occasion gives,
"But try your title while your father lives."

In subsequent editions, probably thinking the word obsolete, he altered it to *avail*. MALONE.

[9] And, with no less NOBILITY of love,] *Nobility*, for *magnitude*. WARBURTON.

Nobility is rather *generosity*. JOHNSON.

By "nobility of love," Mr. Heath understands, eminence and distinction of love. MALONE.

So, afterwards, the Ghost, describing his affection for the Queen:

"To me, whose *love was that of dignity*," &c. STEEVENS.

[1] Do I impart toward you.] I believe *impart* is, *impart myself*, *communicate* whatever I can bestow. JOHNSON.

The crown of Denmark was elective. So, in Sir Clyomon, Knight of the Golden Shield, &c. 1599:

In going back to school in Wittenberg [2],
It is most retrograde to our desire:

" And me possess for spoused wife, who in *election* am
" To have the *crown of Denmark* here, as heir unto the same."

The King means, that as Hamlet stands the fairest chance to be next elected, he will strive with as much love to ensure the crown to him, as a father would show in the continuance of heirdom to a son. STEEVENS.

I agree with Mr. Steevens, that the crown of Denmark (as in most of the Gothick kingdoms) was elective, and not hereditary; though it must be customary, in elections, to pay some attention to the royal blood, which by degrees produced hereditary succession. Why then do the rest of the commentators so often treat Claudius as an *usurper*, who had deprived young Hamlet of his *right* by *heirship* to his father's crown? Hamlet calls him drunkard, murderer, and villain; one who had carried the election by low and mean practices; had—

" Popp'd in between the election and my hopes—."

had—

" From a shelf the precious diadem stole,
" And put it in his pocket: "

but never hints at his being an *usurper*. His discontent arose from his uncle's being preferred before him, not from any legal right which he pretended to set up to the crown. Some regard was probably had to the recommendation of the preceding prince, in electing the successor. And therefore young Hamlet had " the voice of the king himself for his succession in Denmark;" and he at his own death prophesies that " the election would light on Fortinbras, who had his dying voice," conceiving that by the death of his uncle, he himself had been king for an instant, and had therefore a right to recommend. When, in the fourth Act, the rabble wished to choose Laertes king, I understand that antiquity was forgot, and custom violated, by electing a new king in the life-time of the old one, and perhaps also by the calling in a stranger to the royal blood. BLACKSTONE.

[2] — to school in Wittenberg.] In Shakspeare's time there was an university at Wittenberg, to which he has made Hamlet propose to return.

The university of Wittenberg, as we learn from Lewkenor's Discourse on Universities, 1600, was founded in 1502, by Duke Frederick, the son of Ernestus Elector: " which since in this latter age is growen famous by reason of the controversies and disputations there handled by Martin Luther and his adherents." Luther and Melancthon, he adds, were both bred there. MALONE.

Our author may have derived his knowledge of this famous

And, we beseech you, bend you to remain [3]
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers,
Hamlet:
I pray thee, stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply;
Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come;
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart [4]: in grace whereof,
No jocund health [5], that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell;
And the king's rouse [6] the heaven shall bruit again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Exeunt King, Queen, Lords, &c.* Polonius, *and* Laertes.

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,

university from The Life of Iacke Wilton, 1594, or The Hystory of Doctor Faustus, of whom the *second report* (printed in the same year) is said to be "written by an English gentleman, *student* at Wittenberg, an University of Germany in Saxony. Ritson.

Or from Marlowe's Doctor Faustus, or a multitude of other publications of that period. Boswell.

3 — bend you to remain —] i. e. subdue your inclination to go from hence, and remain, &c. Steevens.

4 Sits smiling to my heart:] Thus, the dying Lothario:

"That sweet revenge *comes smiling to my thoughts.*"

Steevens.

"Sits smiling *to* my heart." Surely it should be:

'Sits smiling *on* my heart.' Ritson.

"*To* my heart," I believe, signifies—*near to, close, next to,* my heart. Steevens.

5 No jocund health,] The King's intemperance is very strongly impressed; every thing that happens to him gives him occasion to drink. Johnson.

6 — the king's rouse —] i. e. the king's draught of jollity. See Othello, Act II. Sc. III. Steevens.

So, in Marlowe's Tragicall Historie of Doctor Faustus:

"He *tooke his rouse* with stoopes of *Rhennish* wine."

Ritson.

Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew[7]!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter[8]! O God! O God *!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fye on't! O fye! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank, and gross in nature,

* Quarto, *O God! God!*

7 — RESOLVE itself into a dew!] *Resolve* means the same as *dissolve*. Ben Jonson uses the word in his Volpone, and in the same sense:

"Forth the *resolved* corners of his eyes."

Again, in The Country Girl, 1647:

"—— my swoln grief, *resolved* in these tears."

Pope has employed the same word in his version of the second Iliad, 44:

"*Resolves* to air, and mixes with the night." STEEVENS.

Again, in Giles Fletcher's Russe Commonwealth, 1591: "In winter time, when all is covered with snow, the dead bodies (so many as die all the winter time) are piled up in a house in the suburbs, like billets on a woodstack, as hard with the frost as a very stone, 'till the spring tide come and *resolve* the frost, what time every man taketh his dead friend and committeth him to the ground." REED.

8 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His CANON 'gainst self-slaughter!] The generality of the editions read—*cannon*, as if the poet's thought were,—'Or that the Almighty had not planted his *artillery* or *arms* of *vengeance*, against self-murder.' But the word which I restored (and which was espoused by the accurate Mr. Hughes, who gave an edition of this play) is the true reading, i. e. that he had not restrained suicide by his *express law and peremptory prohibition*. THEOBALD.

There are yet those who suppose the old reading to be the true one, as they say the word *fixed* seems to decide very strongly in its favour. I would advise such to recollect Virgil's expression:

——*fixit* leges pretio, atque *refixit*. STEEVENS.

If the true reading wanted any support, it might be found in Cymbeline:

"——'*gainst self slaughter*
"There is a *prohibition* so divine,
"That cravens my weak hand."

In Shakspeare's time *canon* (*norma*) was commonly spelt *cannon*.
MALONE.

Possess it merely [9]. That it should come to this!
But two months dead!—nay, not so much, not two:
So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr [1]: so loving to my mother,
That he might not beteeme the winds of heaven [2]

[9] —merely.] is *entirely, absolutely.* STEEVENS.

[1] So excellent a king; that was, to this,
HYPERION to a satyr:] This similitude at first sight seems to be a little far-fetched; but it has an exquisite beauty. By the *Satyr* is meant *Pan*, as by *Hyperion*, *Apollo*. *Pan* and *Apollo* were brothers, and the allusion is to the contention between those gods for the preference in musick. WARBURTON.

All our English poets are guilty of the fame false quantity, and call Hypĕrīon Hypērĭon; at least the only instance I have met with to the contrary, is in the old play of Fuimus Troes, 1633:

"—— Blow, gentle Africus,
"Play on our poops, when Hypĕrīon's son
"Shall couch in west."

Shakspeare, I believe, has no allusion in the present instance, except to the beauty of Apollo, and its immediate opposite, the deformity of a Satyr. STEEVENS.

Hyperion or *Apollo* is represented in all the ancient statues, &c. as exquisitely beautiful, the *satyrs* hideously ugly.—Shakspeare may surely be pardoned for not attending to the *quantity* of Latin names, here and in Cymbeline; when we find Henry Parrot, the author of a collection of Epigrams printed in 1613, to which a Latin preface is prefixed, writing thus:

"*Posthúmus*, not the last of many more,
"Asks why I write in such an idle vaine," &c.

Laquei Ridiculosi, or Springes for Woodcocks, 16mo. sign. c. 3.

So, in Whitney's Emblems, p. 14:

"The wretched world, so false and full of crime,
"Did always move *Heraclitus* to weep." MALONE.

[2] That he MIGHT NOT BETEEM the winds of heaven—] In former editions:

"That he *permitted not* the winds of heaven—."

This is a sophisticated reading, copied from the players in some of the modern editions, for want of understanding the poet, whose text is corrupt in the old impressions: all of which that I have had the fortune to see, concur in reading:

"—— so loving to my mother,
"That he might not *beteene* the winds of heaven
"Visit her face too roughly."

Beteene is a corruption without doubt, but not so inveterate a

Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,

one, but that, by the change of a single letter, and the separation of two words mistakenly jumbled together, I am verily persuaded, I have retrieved the poet's reading—

'That he might not *let e'en* the winds of heaven," &c.

THEOBALD.

The obsolete and corrupted verb—*beteene*, (in the first folio) which should be written (as in all the quartos) *beteeme*, was changed, as above, by Mr. Theobald; and with the aptitude of his conjecture succeeding criticks appear to have been satisfied.

Beteeme, however, occurs in the tenth book of Arthur Golding's version of Ovid's Metamorphosis, 4to. 1587; and, from the corresponding Latin, must necessarily signify, to *vouchsafe*, *deign*, *permit*, or *suffer*:

" —— Yet could he not *beteeme*
" The shape of anie other bird than egle for to seeme."

Sign. R. 1. b.

—— nulla tamen alite verti
Dignatur, nisi quæ possit sua fulmina ferre. V. 157.

Jupiter (though anxious for the possession of Ganymede) would not *deign* to assume a meaner form, or *suffer* change into an humbler shape, than that of the august and vigorous fowl who bears the thunder in his pounces.

The existence and signification of the verb *beteem* being thus established, it follows, that the attention of Hamlet's father to his queen was exactly such as is described in the Enterlude of the Life and Repentaunce of Marie Magdalaine, &c. by Lewis Wager, 4to. 1567:

" But evermore they were unto me very tender,
" They *would not suffer the wynde on me to blowe*."

I have therefore replaced the ancient reading, without the slightest hesitation, in the text.

This note was inserted by me in The Gentleman's Magazine, some years before Mr. Malone's edition of our author (in which the same justification of the old reading—*beteeme*, occurs,) had made its appearance. STEEVENS.

This passage ought to be a perpetual memento to all future editors and commentators to proceed with the utmost caution in emendation, and never to discard a word from the text, merely because it is not the language of the present day.

Mr. Hughes or Mr. Rowe, supposing the text to be unintelligibly, for *beteeme* boldly substituted *permitted*. Mr. Theobald, in order to favour his own emendation, stated untruly that *all* the old copies which he had seen, read *beteene*. His emendation

As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: And yet, within a month,—
Let me not think on't;—Frailty, thy name is woman!—
A little month; or ere those shoes were old,
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears[3];—why she, even she,—
(O heaven! a beast, that wants discourse of reason[4],

appearing uncommonly happy, was adopted by all the subsequent editors.

We find a sentiment similar to that before us, in Marston's Insatiate Countess, 1613:

" ——— she had a lord,
" Jealous that air should ravish her chaste looks."

MALONE.

Rowe has an elegant imitation of this passage in Jane Shore:

" When she was mine no care came ever nigh her;
" I thought the gentlest breeze that wakes the spring,
" Too rough to breathe upon her." BOSWELL.

[3] Like Niobe, all tears;] Shakspeare might have caught this idea from an ancient ballad intitled The Falling out of Lovers is the renewing of Love:

" Now I, like weeping *Niobe*,
" May wash my handes in teares," &c.

Of this ballad Amantium iræ, &c. is the burden. STEEVENS.

Or from Whitney's Emblems, p. 13, 1586:

" Of Niobe behoulde the ruthefulle plighte,
" Bicause shee did dispise the powers devine,
" Her children all, weare slaine within her sighte,
" And, while her selfe, with trickling teares did pine,
" Shee was transform'de into a marble stone,
" Which, yet with teares, doth seeme to waile and mone."

MALONE.

[4] A beast, that wants DISCOURSE OF REASON.] This is finely expressed, and with a philosophical exactness. Beasts want not reason, but the *discourse of reason*, i. e. the regular inferring one thing from another by the assistance of universals. WARBURTON.

Mr. Gifford, in a note on Massinger's Unnatural Combat, has ridiculed this note, and maintains that we should read—" discourse *and* reason." But the phraseology of the text may be supported by numerous examples. Out of many collected by Mr. Malone, I will produce two. Our author himself uses the same language in Troilus and Cressida, Act II. Sc. II.:

Would have mourn'd longer,)—married with my uncle,
My father's brother; but no more like my father,
Than I to Hercules: Within a month;
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married:—O most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come to, good;
But break, my heart; for I must hold my tongue!

Enter HORATIO, BERNARDO, *and* MARCELLUS.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!
Ham. I am glad to see you well:
Horatio,—or I do forget myself.
Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

"——Is your blood
"So madly hot that no *discourse of reason*—
"Can gratify the same."

Sir John Davys in the preface to his Reports: "And this idea have I conceived of him, not out of mine own imagination, or weak *discourse of reason*, &c." I will add but one more from Sir Henry Savile's translation of Tacitus's Life of Agricola, 1591, p. 242: "Agricola, though brought up in the field, upon a naturall wit, and *discourse of reason*." Hamlet himself will best explain the phrase:

"Sure he that made us with such large *discourse*,
"Looking before and after."—

Brutes certainly have not what Warburton in his dashing language terms reason, but they have faculties which philosophers in all ages have been puzzled to define. They have memory; and they have that degree of judgment which enables them to distinguish between two objects directly before them; as a dog knows his master from a stranger. Hamlet means to say that even their imperfect faculties, without an abstract knowledge of good or evil, would have made them capable of feeling such a loss as his mother had sustained, and of seeing the difference between his father and his uncle. BOSWELL.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name[5] with you.
And what make you[6] from Wittenberg, Horatio?—
Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord,——

Ham. I am very glad to see you; good even, sir[7]—.
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so;
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself: I know, you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?
We'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;
I think, it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd meats[8]

[5] —— I'll change that name —] I'll be your servant, you shall be my friend. JOHNSON.

[6] —— what make you —] A familiar phrase for *what are you doing*. JOHNSON.

See As You Like It, Act I. Sc. I. STEEVENS.

[7] —— good EVEN, sir.] So the copies. Sir Thomas Hanmer and Dr. Warburton put it—good *morning*. The alteration is of no importance, but all licence is dangerous. There is no need of any change. Between the first and eighth Scene of this Act it is apparent, that a natural day must pass; and how much of it is already over, there is nothing that can determine. The King has held a council. It may now as well be *evening* as *morning*. JOHNSON.

The change made by Sir T. Hanmer might be justified by what Marcellus said of Hamlet at the conclusion of Sc. I.:

" —— and I this *morning* know
" Where we shall find him most convenient."

STEEVENS.

[8] —— the funeral bak'd meats —] It was anciently the general custom to give a cold entertainment to mourners at a funeral,

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
'Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven [9]
Or ever [1] I had seen that day, Horatio!—
My father,—Methinks, I see my father.

Hor. Oh * where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye [2], Horatio.

* Quarto omits *oh*.

In distant counties this practice is continued among the yeomanry. See The Tragique Historie of the Faire Valeria of London, 1598: "His corpes was with funerall pompe conveyed to the church, and there sollemnly enterred, nothing omitted which necessitie or custom could claime; a sermon, a *banquet*, and like observations." Again, in the old romance of Syr Degore, bl. l. no date:

"A great *feaste* would he holde
"Upon his quenes mornynge day,
"That was buryed in an abbay." COLLINS.

See also, Hayward's Life and Raigne of King Henrie the Fourth, 4to. 1599, p. 135: "Then hee [King Richard II.] was conveyed to Langley Abby in Buckinghamshire,—and there obscurely interred,—without the charge of a *dinner* for celebrating the funeral." MALONE.

[9] —— DEAREST foe in heaven —] *Dearest* for *direst*, most dreadful, most dangerous. JOHNSON.

So, in Twelfth Night, Act V. Sc. I.

"Whom thou in terms so bloody and so *dear*
"Hast made thine enemies." BLAKEWAY.

Dearest is *most immediate, consequential, important*, So, in Romeo and Juliet:

"—— a ring that I must use
"In *dear* employment."

Again, in Beaumont and Fletcher's Maid in the Mill:

"You meet your *dearest* enemy in love,
"With all his hate about him." STEEVENS.

See Timon of Athens, Act V. Sc. II. MALONE.

[1] — OR ever —] Thus the quarto 1604. The folio reads—*ere* I had ever. This is not the only instance in which a familiar phraseology has been substituted for one more ancient, in that valuable copy. MALONE.

[2] In my mind's eye,] This expression occurs again in our author's Rape of Lucrece:

"—— himself behind
"Was left unseen, save to *the eye of mind*."

Again, in Chaucer's Man of Lawes Tale:

"But it were with thilke *eyen of his minde*,
"With which men mowen see whan they ben blinde."

Hor. I saw him once, he was a goodly king.
Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again [3].
Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.
Ham. Saw! who?
Hor. My lord, the king your father.
Ham. The king my father!
Hor. Season your admiration [4] for a while
With an attent ear [5]; till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.
Ham. For God's love, let me hear.,
Hor. Two nights together, had these gentlemen
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead waist and middle of the night [6],

Ben Jonson has borrowed it in his Masque called Love's Triumph through Callipolis:

"As only by *the mind's eye* may be seen."

Again, in the Microcosmos of John Davies of Hereford, 4to. 1605:

"And through their closed eies their *mind's eye* peeps."

Telemachus lamenting the absence of Ulysses, is represented in like manner:

'Οσσόμενος πατέρ' ἐσθλὸν ἐνὶ φρεσὶν. *Odyss.* lib. i. 115.

STEEVENS.

This expression occurs again in our author's 113th Sonnet:

"Since I left you, mine *eye is in my mind.*" MALONE.

[3] *I* shall not look upon his like again.] Mr. Holt proposes to read, from an emendation of Sir Thomas Samwell, Bart. of Upton, near Northampton:

"*Eye* shall not look upon his like again;"

and thinks it is more in the true spirit of Shakspeare than the other. So, in Stowe's Chronicle, p. 746: "In the greatest pomp that euer *eye* behelde." Again, in Sandys's Travels, p. 150: "We went this day through the most pregnant and pleasant valley that ever *eye* beheld."

Again, in Sidney's Arcadia, lib. iii. p. 293, edit. 1633:

"—— as cruell a fight as *eye* did ever see."

STEEVENS.

[4] SEASON your admiration —] That is, *temper* it. JOHNSON.

[5] With an ATTENT ear;] Spenser, as well as our poet, uses *attent* for *attentive*. MALONE.

[6] In the dead WAIST and middle of the night.] This strange

Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Armed at point[7], exactly, cap-à-pé,
Appears before them, and, with solemn march,
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd,
By their oppress'd and fear-surprized eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distill'd
Almost to jelly with the act of fear[8],
Stand dumb, and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did;
And I with them, the third night kept the watch:
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes: I knew your father;
These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

phraseology seems to have been common in the time of Shakspeare. By *waist* is meant nothing more than *middle*; and hence the epithet *dead* did not appear incongruous to our poet. So, in Marston's Malecontent, 1604:

"'Tis now about the immodest *waist* of *night*."

i. e. midnight. Again, in The Puritan, a comedy, 1607: "— ere the day be spent to the *girdle*—."

In the old copies the word is spelt *wast*, as it is in the second Act, Sc. II.: "Then you live about her *wast*, or in the middle of her favours." The same spelling is found in King Lear, Act IV. Sc. VI.: "Down from the *wast*, they are centaurs." See also, Minsheu's Dict. 1617: "*Wast*, *middle*, or girdle-steed." We have the same pleonasm in another line in this play:

"And given my heart a working *mute* and *dumb*."

All the modern editors read—"In the dead *waste*," &c.

MALONE.

Dead waste may be the true reading. See The Tempest, Act I. Sc. II. STEEVENS.

7 Armed at point.] Thus the quartos. The folio:

"Arm'd at *all* points." STEEVENS.

8 —— with the act of FEAR,] *Fear* was the cause, the active cause that *distilled* them by the force of operation which we strictly call *act* in voluntary, and *power* in involuntary *agents*, but popularly call *act* in both. JOHNSON.

The folio reads—*bestil'd*. STEEVENS.

Ham. Did you not speak to it [9]?
Hor. My lord, I did;
But answer made it none: yet once, methought,
It lifted up its head, and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak:
But, even then, the morning cock crew loud [1];

9 Did you not SPEAK to it?] Fielding, who was well acquainted with vulgar superstitions, in his Tom Jones, b. xi. ch. ii. observes that Mrs. Fitzpatrick, "like a ghost, only wanted to be spoke to," but then very readily answered. It seems from this passage, as well as from others in books too mean to be formally quoted, that spectres were supposed to maintain an obdurate silence, till interrogated by the people to whom they appeared.

The drift therefore of Hamlet's question is, whether his father's shade had been spoken to; and not whether Horatio, as a particular or privileged person, was the speaker to it. Horatio tells us he had seen the late King but once, and therefore cannot be imagined to have any particular interest with his apparition.

The vulgar notion that a ghost could only be spoken to with propriety and effect by a scholar, agrees very well with the character of Marcellus, a common officer; but it would have disgraced the Prince of Denmark to have supposed the spectre would more readily comply with Horatio's solicitation, merely because it was that of a man who had been studying at a university.

We are at liberty to think the Ghost would have replied to Francisco, Bernardo, or Marcellus, had either of them ventured to question it. It was actually preparing to address Horatio, when the cock crew. The convenience of Shakspeare's play, however, required that the phantom should continue dumb, till Hamlet could be introduced to hear what was to remain concealed in his own breast, or to be communicated by him to some intelligent friend, like Horatio, in whom he could implicitly confide.

By what particular person therefore an apparition which exhibits itself only for the purpose of being urged to speak, was addressed, could be of no consequence.

Be it remembered likewise, that the words are not as lately pronounced on the stage,—"Did not *you* speak to it?"—but—"Did you not *speak* to it?"—How aukward will the innovated sense appear, if attempted to be produced from the passage as it really stands in the true copies!

"Did *you* not speak to it?"

The emphasis, therefore, should most certainly rest on—*speak*.

STEEVENS.

1 —— the morning cock crew loud;] The moment of the evan-

And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;
And we did think it writ down in our duty,
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night?

*All.** We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you?

All. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

All. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not
His face?

Hor. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up[2].

* First folio, *Both.*

escence of spirits was supposed to be limited to the crowing of the cock. This belief is mentioned so early as by Prudentius, Cathem. Hymn. I. v. 40. But some of his commentators prove it to be of much higher antiquity.

It is a most inimitable circumstance in Shakspeare, so to have managed this popular idea, as to make the Ghost, which has been so long obstinately silent, and of course must be dismissed by the morning, begin or rather prepare to speak, and to be interrupted, at the very critical time of the crowing of a cock.

Another poet, according to custom, would have suffered his Ghost tamely to vanish, without contriving this start, which is like a start of guilt. To say nothing of the aggravation of the future suspence, occasioned by this preparation to speak, and to impart some mysterious secret. Less would have been expected, had nothing been promised. T. Warton.

[2] — wore his BEAVER UP.] Though *beaver* properly signified that part of the helmet which was *let down*, to enable the wearer to drink, Shakspeare always uses the word as denoting that part of the helmet which, when raised up, exposed the face of the wearer: and such was the popular signification of the word in his time. In Bullokar's English Expositor, 8vo. 1616, *beaver* is defined thus:—" In armour it signifies that part of the helmet which may be *lifted up*, to take breath the more freely." Malone.

So, in Laud's Diary: " The Lord Broke shot in the left eye, and killed in the place at Lichfield—his *bever up*, and armed to

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly?
Hor. A countenance more
In sorrow than in anger.
Ham. Pale, or red?
Hor. Nay, very pale.
Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?
Hor. Most constantly.
Ham. I would, I had been there.
Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.
Ham. Very like,
Very like: Stay'd it long?
Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell
a hundred.
Mar. Ber. Longer, longer.
Hor. Not when I saw it.
Ham. His beard was grizzled? no?
Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
A sable silver'd[3].
Ham. I will watch to-night;
Perchance, 'twill walk again.
Hor. I warrant you, it will.
Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still[4];
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue;
I will requite your loves; So, fare you well:
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

the knee, so that a musket at that distance could have done him little harm." FARMER.

[3] A sable silver'd.] So, in our poet's 12th Sonnet:
"And *sable curls*, all *silver'd* o'er with white." MALONE.

[4] Let it be TENABLE in your silence still;] Thus the quartos, and rightly. The folio 1623, reads—*treble*. STEEVENS.

All. Our duty to your honour.
Ham. Your loves, as mine to you: Farewell.
[*Exeunt Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo.*
My father's spirit in arms[2]! all is not well;
I doubt some foul play: 'would, the night were come!
Till then sit still, my soul: Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

A Room in Polonius' House.

Enter Laertes and Ophelia.

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd: farewell:
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.
Oph. Do you doubt that?
Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The pérfume and suppliance of a minute[3];
No more.

[2] My father's spirit in arms!] From what went before, I once hinted to Mr. Garrick, that these words might be spoken in this manner:

My father's spirit! in arms! all is not well—. Whalley.

[3] The pérfume and suppliance of a minute;] Thus the quarto: the folio has it—

"—— sweet, not lasting,
"*The suppliance* of a minute."

It is plain that *perfume* is necessary to exemplify the idea of *sweet, not lasting*. With the word *suppliance* I am not satisfied, and yet dare hardly offer what I imagine to be right. I suspect that *soffiance*, or some such word, formed from the Italian, was then used for the act of fumigating with sweet scents. Johnson.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more:
For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
In thews [4], and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps, he loves you now;
And now no soil, nor cautel, doth besmirch
The virtue of his will [5]: but, you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth [6]:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends

"The perfume and *suppliance* of a minute." i. e. what was supplied to us for a minute; or, as Mr. M. Mason supposes, "an amusement to fill up a vacant moment, and render it agreeable." This word occurs in Chapman's version of the ninth Iliad of Homer:

"—— by my *suppliance* given." Steevens.

[4] In THEWS,] i. e. in *sinews, muscular strength*. So, in King Henry IV. P. II.: "Care I for the limb, the *thewes*, the stature," &c. Steevens.

[5] And now no soil, nor CAUTEL, doth besmirch
The VIRTUE of his will;] From *cautela*, which signifies only a *prudent foresight* or *caution;* but, passing through French hands, it lost its innocence, and now signifies *fraud, deceit*. And so he uses the adjective in Julius Cæsar:

"Swear priests and cowards, and men *cautelous*."
Warburton.

So, in the second part of Greene's Art of Coneycatching, 1592: "— and their subtill *cautels* to amend the statute." *To amend the statute*, was the cant phrase for evading the law. Steevens.

Cautel is *subtlety* or *deceit*. Minsheu in his Dictionary, 1617, defines it, "A crafty way to deceive." The word is again used by Shakspeare, in A Lover's Complaint:

"In him a plenitude of subtle matter,
"Applied to *cautels*, all strange forms receives." Malone.

Virtue seems here to comprise both *excellence* and *power*, and may be explained the *pure effect*. Johnson.

The "virtue of his will" means, his *virtuous intentions*. *Cautel* means *craft*. So, Coriolanus says:

"—— be caught by *cautelous* baits and practice."
M. Mason.

[6] For he himself, &c.] This line is not in the quarto. Malone.

* The form of man is here admirably described as a Temple raised for the worship of God in which the mind & soul are said to do service. Farmer on 'Hamlet's madness' B. J. 407.

The safety and the health of the whole state[7];
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
Unto the voice and yielding of that body,
Whereof he is the head: Then if he says he loves
you,
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,
As he in his particular act and place *
May give his saying deed; which is no further,
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs;
Or lose your heart; or your chaste treasure open
To his unmaster'd[8] importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
And keep you in † the rear of your affection[9],
Out of the shot and danger of desire.
The chariest maid[1] is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes:
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd;
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.

* First folio, *peculiar sect and force.*
† First folio, *keep within.*

7 The SAFETY and THE health of the whole state;] Thus the quarto 1604, except that it has—"*this* whole state," and the second *the* is inadvertently omitted. The folio reads:

"The *sanctity* and health of the whole state."

This is another proof of arbitrary alterations being sometimes made in the folio. The editor, finding the metre defective, in consequence of the article being omitted before *health*, instead of supplying it, for *safety* substituted a word of three syllables. MALONE.

8 — unmaster'd —] i. e. *licentious.* JOHNSON.

9 — keep you in the rear, &c.] That is, do not advance so far as your affection would lead you. JOHNSON.

1 The CHARIEST maid —] *Chary* is *cautious.* So, in Greene's Never Too Late, 1616: "Love requires not chastity, but that her soldiers be *chary.*" Again: "She liveth chastly enough, that liveth *charily.*" STEEVENS.

Be wary then: best safety lies in fear;
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart: But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven;
Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own read [2].

Laer. O fear me not.
I stay too long;—But here my father comes.

Enter Polonius.

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame;
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail [3],
And you are staid for: There,—my blessing with you;
[*Laying his Hand on Laertes' Head.*

[2] — RECKS not his own READ.] That is, heeds not his own lessons. POPE.

So, in the old Morality of Hycke Scorner:

" ——— I *reck* not a feder."

Again, *ibidem*:

" And of thy living, I *reed* amend thee."

Ben Jonson uses the word *reed* in his Cataline:

" So that thou could'st not move
" Against a publick *reed*."

Again, in Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch: "— Dispatch, I *read* you, for your enterprize is betrayed." Again, the old proverb, in The Two Angry Women of Abington, 1599:

" Take heed, is a good *reed*."

i. e. good *counsel*, good *advice*. STEEVENS.

So, Sternhold, Psalm i.:

" —— that hath not lent
" To wicked *rede* his ear." BLACKSTONE.

[3] — the shoulder of your sail,] This is a common sea phrase. STEEVENS.

And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou charácter[5]. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel[6];
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade[7]. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel: but, being in,
Bear it, that the opposed may beware of thee.

[5] And these few precepts in thy MEMORY
Look thou CHARÁCTER.] i. e. write, strongly infix. The same phrase is again used by our author in his 122d Sonnet:

"—— thy tables are within my brain
"Full *character'd* with lasting *memory*."

Again, in the Two Gentlemen of Verona:

"—— I do conjure thee,
"Who art the table wherein all my thoughts
"Are visibly *charácter'd* and engrav'd." MALONE.

[6] Grapple them to thy soul with HOOKS of steel;] The old copies read—with *hoops* of steel. I have no doubt that this was a corruption in the original quarto of 1604, arising, like many others, from similitude of sounds. The emendation which was made by Mr. Pope, and adopted by three subsequent editors, is strongly supported by the word *grapple*. See Minsheu's Dict. 1617: "To *hook* or *grapple*, viz. to grapple and to board a ship."

A *grapple* is an instrument with several *hooks* to lay hold of a ship, in order to board it.

This correction is also justified by our poet's 137th Sonnet:

"Why of eyes' falshood hast thou forged *hooks*,
"Whereto the judgement of my heart is *ty'd?*"

It may be also observed, that *hooks* are sometimes made of steel, but *hoops* never. MALONE.

We have, however, in King Henry IV. Part II.:

"A *hoop* of gold to bind thy brothers in."

The former part of the phrase occurs also in Macbeth:

"*Grapples* you to the heart and love of us." STEEVENS.

[7] But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade.] The literal sense is, 'Do not make thy palm callous by shaking every man by the hand.' The figurative meaning may be, 'Do not by promiscuous conversation make thy mind insensible to the difference of characters.' JOHNSON.

Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice:
Take each man's censure [8], but reserve thy judgement.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
For the apparel oft proclaims the man [9];
And they in France, of the best rank and station,
Are of a most select and generous chief, in that [1].

[8] —each man's CENSURE,] *Censure* is *opinion*. So, in King Henry VI. Part II.:

"The king is old enough to give his *censure*." STEEVENS.

[9] For the apparel oft proclaims the man;] "A *man's attire*, and excessive laughter, and gait, *shew what he is*." *Eccūs* xix. ver. 30. TODD.

[1] Are OF A most select and generous CHIEF, in that.] Thus the quarto 1604; and the folio, except that in that copy the word *chief* is spelt *cheff*. The substantive *chief*, which signifies in heraldry the upper part of the shield, appears to have been in common use in Shakspeare's time, being found in Minsheu's Dictionary, 1617. He defines it thus:—"Est superior et scuti nobilior pars; tertiam partem ejus obtinet; ante Christi adventum dabatur in maximi honoris signum; senatoribus et honoratis viris." B. Jonson has used the word in his Poetaster.

The meaning then seems to be, 'They in France approve themselves of a most select and generous escutcheon by their dress.' *Generous* is used with the signification of *generosus*. So, in Othello: "The *generous* islanders," &c.

Chief, however, may have been used as a substantive, for *note* or *estimation*, without any allusion to heraldry, though the word was perhaps originally *heraldick*. So, in Bacon's Colours of Good and Evil, 16mo. 1597: "In the warmer climates the people are generally more wise, but in the northern climates the wits *of chief* are greater."

If *chief* in this sense had not been familiarly understood, the editor of the folio must have considered the line as unintelligible, and would have probably omitted the words—*of a* in the beginning of it, or attempted some other correction. That not having been done, I have adhered to the old copies.

Our poet, from various passages in his works, appears to have been accurately acquainted with all the terms of heraldry. MALONE.

I think the whole design of the precept shows that we should read:

'Are most select, and generous chief, in that.'

Neither a borrower, nor a lender be:
For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry [2].
This above all,—To thine ownself be true;
And it must follow, as the night the day [3],
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell; my blessing season this in thee [4]!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you [5]; go, your servants tend [6].

Chief may be an *adjective* used *adverbially*, a practice common to our author: *chiefly* generous. Yet it must be owned that the punctuation recommended is very stiff and harsh.

I would, however, more willingly read:

And they in France, of the best rank and station,
Select and generous, are most *choice* in that.

Let the reader, who can discover the slightest approach towards sense, harmony, or metre, in the original line,—

"Are *of a* most select and generous chief, in that—"

adhere to the old copies.

Of chief, in the passage quoted from Bacon, is, I believe, a bald translation of the old French phrase—*de chef*, whatever, in the present instance, might be its intended meaning. Steevens.

The genuine meaning of the passage requires us to point the line thus:

"Are most select and generous, chief in that."

i. e. the nobility of France are select and generous above all other nations, and chiefly in the point of apparel; the richness and elegance of their dress. Ritson.

[2] —of husbandry;] i. e. of thrift; œconomical prudence. Malone.

[3] And it must follow, as the night the day,] So, in the 145th Sonnet of Shakspeare:

"That follow'd it *as gentle day*
"*Doth follow night*," &c. Steevens.

[4] —my blessing season this in thee!] *Season*, for *infuse*. Warburton.

It is more than to *infuse*, it is to infix it in such a manner as that it never may wear out. Johnson.

So, in the mock tragedy represented before the king:

"—— who in want a hollow friend doth try,
"Directly *seasons* him his enemy." Steevens.

[5] The time invites you;] So, in Macbeth:

"I go, and it is done, the bell *invites* me." Steevens.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it[7].

Laer. Farewell. [*Exit* Laertes.

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought:
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you: and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous:
If it be so, (as so 'tis put on me,
And that in way of caution,) I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour:
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late, made many tenders
Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection? puh! you speak like a green girl,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance[8].

Thus the folio. The quarto 1604 reads—The time *invests* you: which Mr. Theobald preferred, supposing, that it meant, "the time *besieges*, presses upon you on every side." But to *invest*, in Shakspeare's time, only signified, to *clothe*, or *give possession*. Malone.

[6] —your servants tend,] i. e. your servants are waiting for you. Johnson.

[7] —yourself shall keep the key of it.] The meaning is, that your counsels are as sure of remaining locked up in my memory, as if yourself carried the key of it. So, in Northward Hoe, by Decker and Webster, 1607: "You shall close it up like a treasure of your own, and yourself *shall keep the key of it*." Steevens.

[8] Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.] *Unsifted* for *untried*. *Untried* signifies either *not tempted*, or *not refined*; *unsifted* signifies the *latter* only, though the sense requires the *former*. Warburton.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby;
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wronging it thus,) you'll tender me a fool[9].

It means, I believe, one who has not sufficiently considered, or thoroughly sifted such matters. M. Mason.

I do not think that the sense requires us to understand *untempted*. "Unsifted in," &c. means, I think, one who has not nicely *canvassed* and examined the peril of her situation. Malone.

That *sifted* means *tempted*, may be seen in the 31st verse of the 22d chapter of St. Luke's Gospel. Harris.

In a subsequent scene, the king says of Hamlet:

"Well, we shall *sift* him."

where it surely cannot mean *tempt*; *unsifted* means *untried, unexperienced*. Boswell.

9 ——— Tender yourself more dearly;
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wronging it thus,) you'll tender me a fool.] The *parenthesis* is closed at the wrong place; and we must have likewise a slight correction in the last verse. [*Wringing* it, &c.] Polonius is racking and playing on the word *tender*, till he thinks proper to correct himself for the licence; and then he would say—not farther to crack the wind of the phrase, by *twisting* it and *contorting* it, as I have done. Warburton.

I believe the word *wronging* has reference, not to the phrase, but to Ophelia; if you go on *wronging it thus*, that is, *if you continue to go on thus wrong*. This is a mode of speaking perhaps not very grammatical, but very common; nor have the best writers refused it.

"To sinner it or saint it,"

is in Pope. And Rowe,

"——— Thus to *coy it*,
With one who knows you too."

The folio has it—*Roaming* it thus. That is, *letting yourself loose to such improper liberty*. But *wronging* seems to be more proper. Johnson.

"See you do not *coy it*," is in Massinger's New Way to Pay Old Debts. Steevens.

I have followed the punctuation of the first quarto 1604, where

Oph. My lord, he hath impórtun'd me with love,
In honourable fashion.
Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it[1]; go to, go to.
Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
With almost all the holy vows * of heaven.
Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks[2]. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter[3],
Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a making,—
You must not take for fire. From this time,
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments[4] at a higher rate,
Than a command to parley †. For lord Hamlet,

* First folio reads, *with all the vows.* † Quarto, *parle.*

the parenthesis is extended to the word *thus*, to which word the context in my apprehension clearly shows it should be carried. "Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase, playing upon it, and abusing it thus,") &c. So, in The Rape of Lucrece:

"To *wrong* the wronger, till he render right."

The quarto, by the mistake of the compositor, reads—*Wrong* it thus. The correction was made by Mr. Pope. Malone.

"——*Tender* yourself more dearly." To *tender* is to *regard with affection.* So, in King Richard II.:

"—————— And so betide me,
"As well I *tender* you and all of yours."

Again, in The Maydes Metamorphosis, by Lily, 1601:

"—— if you account us for the same
"That *tender* thee, and love Apollo's name." Malone.

[1] —FASHION you may call it;] She uses *fashion* for *manner*, and he for a *transient practice.* Johnson.

[2] — springes to catch woodcocks,] A proverbial saying, "Every woman has a *springe to catch a woodcock.*" Steevens.

[3] —these blazes, daughter,] Some epithet to *blazes* was probably omitted, by the carelessness of the transcriber or compositor, in the first quarto, in consequence of which the metre is defective. Malone.

Et tu, Brute! How many lines in this very play are equally defective. Boswell.

Believe so much in him, That he is young;
And with a larger tether [5] may he walk,
Than may be given you: In few, Ophelia,
Do not believe his vows: for they are brokers [6]
Not of that die which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds [7],

[4] Set your ENTREATMENTS —] *Entreatments* here mean *company, conversation*, from the French *entrétien*. JOHNSON.

[5] — larger TETHER —] A string to tie horses. POPE.

Tether is that string by which an animal, set to graze in grounds uninclosed, is confined within the proper limits. JOHNSON.

So, in Greene's Card of Fancy, 1601 :—" To tye the ape and the bear in one *tedder*." *Tether* is a string by which any animal is fastened, whether for the sake of feeding or the air. STEEVENS.

[6] Do not believe his VOWS: for they are BROKERS —] A *broker* in old English meant a *bawd* or *pimp*. See the Glossary to Gawin Douglas's translation of Virgil. So, in King John:

" This *bawd*, this *broker*," &c.

See also, Troilus and Cressida, Act V. Sc I.:

" Hence *broker* lackey."

In our author's Lover's Complaint we again meet with the same expression, applied in the same manner:

" Know, *vows* are ever *brokers* to defiling." MALONE.

[7] Breathing like sanctified and pious BONDS,] On which the editor, Mr. Theobald, remarks, " Though all the editors have swallowed this reading implicitly, it is certainly corrupt; and I have been surprized how men of genius and learning could let it pass without some suspicion. What idea can we frame to ourselves of a breathing bond, or of its being sanctified and pious, &c." But he was too hasty in *framing ideas* before he understood those already framed by the poet, and expressed in very plain words. Do not believe (says Polonius to his daughter) Hamlet's amorous vows made *to you;* which pretend religion in them (*the better to beguile*) like those sanctified and pious vows [or bonds] made *to heaven*. And why should not this " pass without suspicion?" WARBURTON.

Theobald for *bonds* substitutes *bawds*. JOHNSON.

Notwithstanding Warburton's elaborate explanation of this passage, I have not the least doubt but Theobald is right, and that we ought to read *bawds* instead of *bonds*. Indeed the present reading is little better than nonsense.

Polonius had called Hamlet's vows, *brokers*, but two lines before, a synonymous word to *bawds*, and the very title that Shakspeare

The better to beguile. This is for all,—
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so slander any moment's leisure [8],
As to give words or talk with the lord Hamlet.
Look to't, I charge you; come your ways.

Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The Platform.

Enter Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

gives to Pandarus, in his Troilus and Cressida. The words *implorators of unholy suits*, are an exact description of a *bawd;* and all such of them as are crafty in their trade, put on the appearance of sanctity, and are "not of that die which their investments show." M. Mason.

The old reading is undoubtedly the true one. Do not, says Polonius, believe his vows, for they are merely uttered for the purpose of persuading you to yield to a criminal passion, though they appear only the genuine effusions of a pure and lawful affection, and assume the semblance of those sacred engagements entered into at the altar of wedlock. The *bonds* here in our poet's thoughts were *bonds of love*. So, in his 142d Sonnet:

"——— those lips of thine,
"That have profan'd their scarlet ornaments,
"And seal'd false *bonds of love*, as oft as mine."

Again, in The Merchant of Venice:

"O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly,
"To seal *love's bonds* new made, than they are wont
"To keep obliged faith unforfeited."

"Sanctified and pious bonds," are the *true bonds of love*, or, as our poet has elsewhere expressed it:

"A contract and *eternal bond of love*." Malone.

[8] I would not, IN PLAIN TERMS, from this time forth,

Have you so slander any moment's leisure,] Polonius says, *in plain terms*, that is, not in language less elevated or embellished before, but *in terms that cannot be misunderstood:* "I would not have you so disgrace your most idle moments, as not to find better employment for them than lord Hamlet's conversation."

Johnson.

Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air [9].
Ham. What hour now?
Hor. I think, it lacks of twelve.
Mar. No, it is struck.
Hor. Indeed? I heard it not; it then draws near the season,
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.
[*A Flourish of Trumpets, and Ordnance shot off, within.*
What does this mean, my lord?
Ham. The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse [1],
Keeps wassel [2], and the swaggering up-spring [3] reels;

9 —an EAGER air.] That is, a *sharp* air, *aigre*, Fr. So, in a subsequent scene;
" And curd, like *eager* droppings into milk." MALONE.

1 —takes his ROUSE,] A *rouse* is a large dose of liquor, a debauch. So, in Othello: "—they have given me a *rouse* already." It should seem from the following passage in Decker's Gul's Hornbook, 1609, that the word *rouse* was of Danish extraction: "Teach me, thou soveraigne skinker, how to take the German's upsy freeze, the *Danish rousa*, the Switzer's stoop of rhenish," &c. STEEVENS.

2 Keeps WASSEL,] See vol. iv. p. 423. Again, in the Hog Hath Lost His Pearl, 1614:
" By Croesus name and by his castle,
" Where winter nights he *keepeth wassel*."
i. e. devotes his nights to jollity. STEEVENS.

3 —the swaggering UP-SPRING—] The blustering upstart. JOHNSON.

It appears from the following passage in Alphonsus, Emperor of Germany, by Chapman, that the *up-spring* was a *German dance*:
" We Germans have no changes in our dances;
" An *almain* and an *up-spring*, that is all."
Spring was anciently the name of a tune: so in Beaumont and Fletcher's Prophetess:
" —— we will meet him,
" And strike him such new *springs*—."
This word is used by G. Douglas in his translation of Virgil, and, I think, by Chaucer. Again, in an old Scots proverb: " Another would play a *spring*, ere you tune your pipes." STEEVENS.

And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out [4]
The triumph of his pledge.

Hor. Is it a custom?

Ham. Ay, marry, is't:
But to my mind,—though I am native here,
And to the manner born,—it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.
[This heavy-headed revel, east and west [5],
Makes us traduc'd, and tax'd of other nations:
They clepe us, drunkards [6], and with swinish phrase

4 — thus BRAY out —] So, in Chapman's version of the 5th Iliad:

"——— he laid out such a throat
"As if nine or ten thousand men had *brayd* out all their breaths
"In one confusion." STEEVENS.

5 [This HEAVY-HEADED revel, EAST and WEST,] This *heavy-headed* revel makes us traduced east and west, and taxed of other nations. JOHNSON.

By *east* and *west*, as Mr. Edwards has observed, is meant, throughout the world; *from one end of it to the other*.—This and the following twenty-one lines have been restored from the quarto, they were probably omitted by the author lest they should give offence to Queen Anne of Denmark. MALONE.

6 They clepe us, drunkards,] And well our Englishmen might; for in Queen Elizabeth's time there was a *Dane* in London, of whom the following mention is made in a collection of characters entitled, Looke to It, for Ile Stab Ye, no date:

"You that will drinke *Keynaldo* unto deth,
"The *Dane* that would carowse out of his boote."

Mr. M. Mason adds, that "it appears from one of Howell's letters, dated at Hamburgh in the year 1632, that the then King of Denmark had not degenerated from his jovial predecessor.—In his account of an entertainment giren by his majesty to the Earl of Leicester, he tells us, that the king, after beginning thirty-five toasts, was carried away in his chair, and that all the officers of the court were drunk." STEEVENS.

See also the Nugæ Antiquæ, vol. ii. p. 133, for the scene of drunkenness introduced into the court of James I. by the King of Denmark, in 1606.

Roger Ascham in one of his Letters, mentions being present at an entertainment where the Emperor of Germany seemed in

Soil our addition; and, indeed it takes
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
The pith and marrow of our attribute [7].
So, oft it chances in particular men,
That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,
As, in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin [8],)
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion [9],
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
The form of plausive manners [1];—that these men,—

drinking to rival the King of Denmark: "The Emperor, (says he) drank the best that ever I saw; he had his head in the glass five times as long as any of us, and never drank less than *a good quart at once of Rhenish wine.*" REED.

7 The pith and marrow of our attribute,] The best and most valuable part of the praise that would be otherwise attributed to us. JOHNSON.

8 That, for some vicious MOLE of nature in them,
As, in their BIRTH, (wherein THEY ARE NOT GUILTY,
Since NATURE cannot choose his origin,)] We have the same sentiment in The Rape of Lucrece:

"For *marks* descried in man's nativity
"Are nature's fault, not their own infamy."

Mr. Theobald, without necessity, altered *mole* to *mould*. The reading of the old copies is fully supported by a passage in King John:

"Patch'd with foul *moles*, and eye-offending *marks*."
MALONE.

9 — complexion,] i. e. humour; as sanguine, melancholy, phlegmatick, &c. WARBURTON.

The quarto 1604 for *the* has *their*; as a few lines lower it has *his* virtues, instead of *their* virtues. The correction was made by Mr. Theobald. MALONE.

1 — that too much O'ER-LEAVENS
The form of PLAUSIVE manners;] That intermingles too much with their manners; infects and *corrupts* them. See Cymbeline, Act III. Sc. IV. *Plausive* in our poet's age signified *gracious, pleasing, popular*. So, in All's Well that Ends Well:

"——— his *plausive* words
"He scatter'd not in ears, but grafted them,
"To grow there, and to bear."

Plausible, in which sense *plausive* is here used, is defined by

Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect;
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star [2],—
Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo [3],)
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault: The dram of eale *
Doth all the noble substance of a doubt,
To his own scandal [4].]

* Quarto 1605, *ease*.

Cawdrey, in his Alphabetical Table, &c. 1604: "Pleasing, or received joyfully and willingly." MALONE.

[2] — fortune's STAR,] Some accidental blemish, the consequence of *the overgrowth of some complexion* or humour allotted to us by fortune at our birth, or some vicious habit accidentally acquired afterwards.

Theobald, plausibly enough, would read—fortune's *scar*. The emendation may be supported by a passage in Antony and Cleopatra:

"The *scars* upon your honour therefore he
"Does pity as constrained *blemishes*,
"Not as deserv'd." MALONE.

"— fortune's star," The word *star* in the text signifies a *scar* of that appearance. It is a term of *farriery*: the *white star* or mark so common on the forehead of a dark coloured horse, is usually produced by making a *scar* on the place. RITSON.

[3] As infinite as man may UNDERGO,)] As large as can be accumulated upon man. JOHNSON.

So, in Measure for Measure:

"To *undergo* such ample grace and honour —." STEEVENS.

[4] —The dram of EALE
Doth all the noble substance OF A DOUBT,
To HIS own scandal.] These lines are evidently corrupt; but such difference of opinion has prevailed as to the best mode of amending them, that I have given the original text, and left it to the reader to judge between contending criticks. BOSWELL.

The quarto, where alone this passage is found, exhibits it thus:

"———— the dram of *eale*
"Doth all the noble substance of a *doubt*,
"To his own scandal."

To *doubt*, as I have observed in a note on King Henry V. signified in Shakspeare's time, and yet signifies in Devonshire and other western counties, to *do out*, to *efface*, to *extinguish*. Thus they say, "*dout* the candle,"—"*dout* the fire," &c. It is exactly

Enter Ghost.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

formed in the same manner as to *don* (or *do on*,) which occurs so often in the writings of our poet and his contemporaries.

I have no doubt that the corruption of the text arose in the following manner. *Dout*, which I have now printed in the text, having been written by the mistake of the transcriber, *doubt*, and the word *worth* having been inadvertently omitted, the line, in the copy that went to the press, stood—

"Doth all the noble substance of *doubt* ——"

The editor or printer of the quarto copy, finding the line too short, and thinking *doubt* must want an article, inserted it, without attending to the context; and instead of correcting the erroneous, and supplying the true word, printed—

"Doth all the noble substance of *a doubt*," &c.

The very same error has happened in King Henry V.:

"That their hot blood may spin in English eyes,
"And *doubt* them with superfluous courage:"

where *doubt* is again printed instead of *dout*.

That *worth* (which was supplied first by Mr. Theobald) was the word omitted originally in the hurry of transcription, may be fairly collected from a passage in Cymbeline, which fully justifies the correction made:

"—— Is she with Posthumus?
"From whose so many weights of *baseness* cannot
"A *dram* of *worth* be drawn."

This passage also adds support to the correction of the word *eale* in the first of these lines, which was likewise made by Mr. Theobald.—*Base* is used substantively for *baseness:* a practice not uncommon in Shakspeare. So, in Measure for Measure:

"Say what thou canst, my *false* outweighs your *true*."

Shakspeare, however, might have written the—'dram of *ill*.' This is nearer the corrupted word *eale*, but the passage in Cymbeline is in favour of the other emendation.

The meaning of the passage thus corrected is, 'The smallest particle of vice so blemishes the whole mass of virtue, as to erase from the minds of mankind the recollection of the numerous good qualities possessed by him who is thus blemished by a single stain, and taints his general character.'

To his own scandal, means, 'so as to reduce the whole mass of worth to *its* own *vicious and unsightly appearance;* to translate his *virtue* to the likeness of *vice*.'

His for *its*, is so common in Shakspeare, that every play furnishes us with examples. So, in a subsequent scene in this play:—
"than the force of honesty can translate beauty into *his* likeness."

Again, in Timon of Athens:

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us[5]!—
Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd[6],

" When every feather sticks in *his* own wing—."
Again, in A Midsummer-Night's Dream:
" Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,
" To take from thence all error with *his* might."
Again, in King Richard II.:
" That it may show me what a face I have,
" Since *it* is bankrupt of *his* majesty."
So, in Grim, the Collier of Croydon:
" Contented life, that gives the heart *his* ease—."
We meet with a sentiment somewhat similar to that before us, in King Henry IV. P. I.:
" —— oftentimes it doth present harsh rage,
" Defect of manners, want of government,
" Pride, haughtiness, opinion, and disdain:
" The *least of which*, haunting a nobleman,
" Loseth men's hearts, and leaves behind *a stain*
" *Upon the beauty of all parts besides*,
" *Beguiling them of commendation*." MALONE.

I once proposed to read—" Doth all the noble substance (i. e. the sum of good qualities) *oft do out*." We should now say,—'To *its* own scandal;' but *his* and *its* are perpetually confounded in the old copies.

As I understand the passage, there is little difficulty in it. This is one of the phrases which at present are neither employed in writing, nor perhaps are reconcileable to propriety of language.

To *do a thing out*, is *to extinguish it*, or *to efface* or *obliterate any thing painted or written*.

In the first of these significations it is used by Drayton, in the 5th Canto of his Barons' Wars:

" Was ta'en in battle, and his eyes *out-done*."

My conjecture—*do out*, instead of *doubt*, might have received support from the pronunciation of this verb in Warwickshire, where they always say—" *dout* the candle,"—" *dout* the fire;" i. e. put out or extinguish them. The fortex by which a candle is extinguished is also there called—*a douter*.

Dout, however, is a word formed by the coalescence of two others,—(*do* and *out*) like *don* for *do on*, *doff* for *do off*, both of which are used by Shakspeare.

The word in question (and with the same blunder in spelling) has already occurred in the ancient copies in King Henry V.:

" —— make incision in their hides,
" That their hot blood may spin in English eyes,
" And *doubt* them with superfluous courage:"

i. e. *put* or *do* them *out*. I therefore now think we should read:

Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,

Doth all the noble substance *often doubt*, &c.
for surely it is needless to say—

—— the *noble* substance of *worth* dout,
because the idea of *worth* is comprehended in the epithet—*noble*.

N. B. The improvement which my former note on this passage has received, I owed, about four years ago, to the late Rev. Henry Homer, a native of Warwickshire. But as Mr. Malone appears to have been furnished with almost the same intelligence, I shall not suppress his mode of communicating it, as he may fairly plead priority in having laid it before the publick. This is the sole cause why our readers are here presented with two annotations, of almost similar tendency, on the same subject: for unwilling as I am to withhold justice from a dead friend, I should with equal reluctance defraud a living critick of his due.

STEEVENS.

Another conjecture was many years ago proposed by Mr. Holt. He would read:

"Doth all the noble substance *oft adopt*."

This, if we suppose *the noble substance*, by an inversion not uncommon in poetry, to be the nominative case, would afford a clear meaning. '*The noble substance* doth oft bring disgrace upon itself by adopting the dram of base.' If this should not be received, instead of *dout*, which has not been shown in any unquestionable instance to have been used in grave composition, I would rather suppose that *to doubt* may have meant *to bring into doubt or suspicion*. Shakspeare and his contemporaries have many words similarly formed. Thus, to *fear* is to *create fear*; to *pale* is to *make pale*:

"——— Gins to *pale* his uneffectual light."

To *cease* is to *cause to cease*. Cymbeline, Act V. Sc. V.:

"A certain stuff, which being ta'en would *cease*
"The present power of life."

So, to *perish* is to *destroy*, in Beaumont and Fletcher's Honest Men's Fortune:

"——— His wants
"And miseries have *perished* his good face."

Yet I should prefer Mr. Holt's emendation. BOSWELL.

5 Angels and ministers of grace defend us! &c.] Hamlet's speech to the apparition of his father seems to consist of three parts. When first he sees the spectre, he fortifies himself with an invocation:

"Angels and ministers of grace defend us!"

As the spectre approaches, he deliberates with himself, and determines, that, whatever it be, he will venture to address it.

"Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,

Thou com'st in such a questionable shape [7],
That I will speak to thee; I'll call thee, Hamlet,

" Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
" Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
" Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
" That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee," &c.

This he says while his father is advancing; he then, as he had determined, speaks to him, and calls him—" Hamlet, King, Father, Royal Dane: O! answer me." JOHNSON.

[6] Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd, &c.] So, in Acolastus his After-Wit, 1600:

" Art thou a god, a man, or else a ghost?
" Com'st thou from heaven, where bliss and solace dwell?
" Or from the airie cold-engendering coast?
" Or from the darksome dungeon-hold of hell?"

The first known edition of this play is in 1604.

The same question occurs also in the MS. known by the title of William and the Werwolf, in the Library of King's College, Cambridge:

" Whether thou be a gode gost in goddis name that speakest,
" Or any foul fiend fourmed in this wise,
" And if we schul of the hent harme or gode." P. 36.

Again, in Barnaby Googe's Fourth Eglog:

" What soever thou art y^t^ thus dost com,
" Ghoost, hagge, or fende of hell,
" I the comaunde by him that lyves
" Thy name and case to tell." STEEVENS.

[7] — QUESTIONABLE shape,] By *questionable* is meant *provoking question*. HANMER.

So, in Macbeth:

" Live you, or are you aught
" That man may *question?*" JOHNSON.

Questionable, I believe, means only, *propitious to conversation*: *easy and willing to be conversed with*. So, in As You Like It: " An *unquestionable* spirit, which you have not." *Unquestionable* in this last instance certainly signifies *unwilling to be talked with*. STEEVENS.

Questionable perhaps only means *capable of being conversed with*. *To question*, certainly in our author's time signified *to converse*. So, in his Rape of Lucrece, 1594:

" For after supper long he *questioned*
" With modest Lucrece —."

Again, in Antony and Cleopatra:

" Out of our *question* wipe him."

See also King Lear, Act V. Sc. III. MALONE.

King, Father, Royal Dane: O, * answer me:
Let me not burst in ignorance! but tell,
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements [8]! why the sepulchre,

* First folio, *oh! oh!*

[8] ——— tell,
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements!] Hamlet, amazed at an apparition, which, though in all ages credited, has in all ages been considered as the most wonderful and most dreadful operation of supernatural agency, enquires of the spectre, in the most emphatick terms, why he breaks the order of nature, by returning from the dead; this he asks in a very confused circumlocution, confounding in his fright the soul and body. 'Why, (says he,) have *thy bones*, which with due ceremonies have been entombed *in death*, in the common state of departed mortals, *burst* the folds in which they were embalmed? Why has the tomb, in which we saw thee quietly laid, opened his mouth, that mouth which, by its weight and stability, seemed closed for ever? The whole sentence is this: 'Why dost thou appear, whom we know to be dead?' JOHNSON.

By the expression "hearsed in death" is meant, shut up and secured with all those precautions which are usually practised in preparing dead bodies for sepulture, such as the winding-sheet, shrowd, coffin, &c. perhaps embalming into the bargain. So that *death* is here used, by a metonymy of the antecedent for the consequents, for the rites of death, such as are generally esteemed due, and practised with regard to dead bodies. Consequently, I understand by *cerements*, the waxed winding-sheet or winding-sheets, in which the corpse was enclosed and sown up, in order to preserve it the longer from external impressions from the humidity of the sepulchre, as embalming was intended to preserve it from internal corruption. HEATH.

"—*canoniz'd* bones," &c. This word should be printed with an accent over the second syllable, in this and the other places in which it occurs in our author: as in King John, Act III. Sc. I.:

"*Canònized* and worshipp'd as a saint."

And again:

"And thou shalt be *canòniz'd* cardinal."

Troilus and Cressida, Act II. Sc. II.:

"And fame in time to come *canònize* us."

This is also the accentuation of Massinger:

"That have *canòniz'd* them you'll find them worse."

Virgin Martyr, Act III. Sc. I.

And again:

"What the *canòniz'd* Spartan ladies were."

And in The Fatal Dowry, Act IV. Sc. I. BLAKEWAY.

Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd[9],
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again! What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again, in cómplete steel[1],
Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature[2],
So horridly to shake our disposition[3],
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

[9] — quietly IN-URN'D,] The quartos read—*interr'd*. STEEVENS.

[1] That thou, dead corse, again, in cómplete steel,] Thus also is the adjective *cómplete* accented by Chapman in his version of the fifth Iliad:

"And made his *cómplete* armour cast a far more *cómplete* light."

Again, in the nineteeth Iliad:

"Grave silence strook the *cómplete* court."

It is probable that Shakspeare introduced his Ghost in armour, that it might appear more solemn by such a discrimination from the other characters; though it was really the custom of the Danish kings to be buried in that manner. Vide Olaus Wormius, cap. vii:

"Struem regi nec vestibus, nec odoribus cumulant, *sua cuique arma*, quorundam igni et equus adjicitur."

"—sed postquam magnanimus ille Danorum rex collem sibi magnitudinis conspicuæ extruxisset, cui post obitum regio diademate exornatum, *armis indutum*, inferendum esset cadaver," &c. STEEVENS.

[2] —we fools of nature,] The expression is fine, as intimating we were only kept (as formerly, fools in a great family,) to make sport for nature, who lay hid only to mock and laugh at us, for our vain searches into her mysteries. WARBURTON.

"——we fools of nature," i. e. making us, who are the sport of nature, whose mysterious operations are beyond the reaches of our souls, &c. So, in Romeo and Juliet:

"O, I am *fortune's fool*." MALONE.

"—— fools of nature," This phrase is used by Davenant, in the Cruel Brother, 1630, Act V. Sc. I. REED.

[3] —to shake our DISPOSITION,] *Disposition* for *frame*. WARBURTON.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
It waves * you to a more removed ground [4]:
But do not go with it.
Hor. No, by no means.
Ham. It will not speak; then I will follow it.
Hor. Do not, my lord.
Ham. Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee [5];
And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again;—I'll follow it.
Hor. What, if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
That beetles o'er his base [6] into the sea?
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason [7],

* First folio, *wafts*.

[4] —a more REMOVED ground:] i. e. *remote*. So, in A Midsummer-Night's Dream:

"From Athens is her house *remov'd* seven leagues."

The first folio reads—*remote*. STEEVENS.

It is *removed* in Mr. Malone's copy of the first folio. BOSWELL.

[5] —pin's fee;] The value of a pin. JOHNSON.

[6] That BEETLES o'er his base—] So, in Sidney's Arcadia, b. i.: "Hills lifted up their *beetle* brows, as if they would overlooke pleasantnesse of their under prospect." STEEVENS.

"That *beetles* o'er his base—" That *hangs o'er* his base, like what is called a *beetle-brow*. This verb is, I believe, of our author's coinage. MALONE.

[7] —DEPRIVE your SOVEREIGNTY of reason.] *Sovereignty of reason* is the same as sovereign or supreme reason, reason which governs man, and thus it was used by the best writers of those times. Sidney says, "It is time for us both to let reason enjoy its due soveraigntie." *Arcad.* And King Charles: "At once to betray the *soveraignty of reason* in my own soul." Εἰκὼν Βασιλικη. It is evident that Shakspeare wrote

"*Deprave* your sovereignty of reason." WARBURTON.

I believe, *deprive* in this place signifies simply to *take away*. JOHNSON.

And draw you into madness? think of it:
The very place [8] puts toys of desperation [9],
Without more motive, into every brain,
That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves * me still:—
Go on, I'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Hor. Be rul'd, you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Némean lion's nerve [1].—
[*Ghost beckons.*

* First folio, *wafts*.

When poets wish to invest any quality or virtue with uncommon splendor, they do it by some allusion to regal eminence. Thus, among the excellencies of Banquo's character, our author distinguishes "his *royalty* of nature," i. e. his natural *superiority* over others, his independent dignity of mind. I have selected this instance to explain the former, because I am told that "*royalty* of nature" has been idly supposed to bear some allusion to Banquo's distant prospect of the crown.

To "*deprive* your sovereignty of reason," therefore, does not signify, 'to deprive your princely mind of rational powers, but, to take away from you the command of reason, by which man is governed.'

So, in Chapman's version of the first Iliad:

"——I come from heaven to see
"Thy anger settled: if thy soul will use *her soveraigntie*
"In fit reflection."

Dr. Warburton would read *deprave;* but several proofs are given in a note to King Lear, Act I. Sc. II. of Shakspeare's use of the word *deprive*, which is the true reading. STEEVENS.

[8] The very place—] The four following lines added from the first edition. POPE.

[9] —puts TOYS of desperation,] *Toys*, for *whims*.
WARBURTON.

[1] As hardy as the NÉMEAN lion's nerve.] Shakspeare has again accented the word *Nemean* in this manner, in Love's Labour's Lost:

"Thus dost thou hear the *Némean* lion roar."

Spenser, however, wrote *Neméan*, Fairy Queen, b. v. c. i.:

Still am I call'd;—unhand me, gentlemen;—
[*Breaking from them.*
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me[2]:—
I say, away:—Go on, I'll follow thee.
[*Exeunt Ghost and* HAMLET.

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after:—To what issue will this come?

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Hor. Heaven will direct it[3].

Mar. Nay, let's follow him.
[*Exeunt.*

"Into the great *Neméan* lion's grove."

Our poet's conforming in this instance to Latin prosody was certainly accidental, for he, and almost all the poets of his time, disregarded the quantity of Latin names. So, in Locrine, 1595, (though undoubtedly the production of a scholar,) we have *Amphĭon* instead of *Amphīon*, &c. See also p. 203, n. 1. MALONE.

The true quantity of this word was rendered obvious to Shakspeare by Twine's translation of part of the Æneid, and Golding's version of Ovid's Metamorphosis. STEEVENS.

[2] — I'll make a GHOST of him that LETS me:] "Villains set down the corse, or by St. Paul,
"*I'll make a corse* of him that disobeys."
Richard III. Act I. Sc. I. BLAKEWAY.

To *let* among our old authors signifies to *prevent*, to *hinder*. It is still a word current in the law, and to be found in almost all leases. STEEVENS.

So, in No Wit like a Woman's, a comedy, by Middleton, 1657:
"That *lets* her not to be your daughter now." MALONE.

[3] Heaven will DIRECT it.] Perhaps it may be more apposite to read, "Heaven will *detect* it." FARMER.

Marcellus answers Horatio's question, "To what issue will this come?" and Horatio also answers it himself with a pious resignation, "Heaven will *direct* it." BLACKSTONE.

SCENE V.

A more remote Part of the Platform.

Re-enter Ghost and HAMLET.

Ham. Whither * wilt thou lead me? speak, I'll go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night;
And, for the day, confin'd to fast in fires [4],

* First folio, *where.*

[4] Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night;
And, for the day, confin'd to FAST in fires,] Chaucer has a similar passage with regard to the punishments of hell, Parson's Tale, p. 193, Mr. Urry's edition: "And moreover the misese of hell, shall be in defaute of mete and drinke." SMITH.

Nash, in his Pierce Penniless his Supplication to the Devil, 1595, has the same idea: "Whether it be a place of horror, stench and darkness, where men *see meat, but can get none*, and are ever thirsty," &c. Before I had read the Persones Tale of Chaucer, I supposed that he meant rather to drop a stroke of satire on sacerdotal luxury, than to give a serious account of the place of future torment. Chaucer, however, is as grave as Shakspeare. So, likewise at the conclusion of an ancient pamphlet called The Wyll of the Devyll, bl. l. no date:

"Thou shalt lye in frost and *fire*
"With sicknesse and *hunger*;" &c.

Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
Are burnt and purg'd away [5]. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood;
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their
spheres [6];

Again, in Love's Labour's Lost:

" ——— love's *fasting* pain."

It is observable, that in the statutes of our religious houses, most of the punishments affect the *diet* of the offenders.

But for the foregoing examples, I should have supposed we ought to read—" confin'd to *waste* in fires." STEEVENS.

This passage requires no amendment. As spirits were supposed to feel the same desires and appetites that they had on earth, to *fast* might be considered as one of the punishments inflicted on the wicked. M. MASON.

[5] Are burnt and purg'd away.] Gawin Douglas really changes the Platonic hell into the " punytion of saulis in purgatory :" and it is observable, that when the Ghost informs Hamlet of his doom there—

" Till the foul crimes done in his days of nature
" Are *burnt and purg'd away*—"

the expression is very similar to the Bishop's. I will give you his version as concisely as I can: " It is a nedeful thyng to suffer panis and torment;—Sum in the wyndis, sum under the watter, and in the fire uthir sum: thus the mony vices—

" Contrakkit in the corpis be *done away*
" *And purgit*."—— *Sixte Book of Eneados, fol. p.* 191.

FARMER.

Shakspeare might have found this expression in The Hystorie of Hamblet, bl. l. F. 2, edit. 1608: " He set fire in the foure corners of the hal, in such sort, that of all that were as then therein not one escaped away, but were forced *to purge their sinnes by fire*." MALONE.

Shakspeare talks more like a Papist, than a Platonist; but the language of Bishop Douglas is that of a good Protestant:

" Thus the mony vices
" Contrakkit in the corpis be done away
" And purgit."

These are the very words of our Liturgy, in the commendatory prayer for a sick person at the point of departure, in the office for the visitation of the sick :—" Whatsoever defilements it may have contracted—being purged and done away." WHALLEY.

[6] Make thy two EYES, like stars, START FROM THEIR SPHERES :] So, in our poet's 108th Sonnet:

Thy knotted * and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand an-end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine [7]:
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood:—List, list, O list †!—
If thou didst ever thy dear father love,——

Ham. O heaven!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder [8].

Ham. Murder?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;

* First folio, *knotty*.

† First folio, *list, Hamlet, oh list*.

" How have mine *eyes out of their spheres been fitted*,
" In the distraction of this madding fever!" MALONE.

7 — FRETFUL porcupine:] The quartos read—*fearful*, &c. Either epithet may serve. This animal is at once irascible and timid. The same image occurs in The Romaunt of the Rose, where Chaucer is describing the personage of *danger*:

" Like sharpe urchons his *heere* was grow."

An *urchin* is a *hedge-hog*.

The old copies, however, have—*porpentine*, which is frequently written by our ancient poets instead of *porcupine*. So, in Skialetheia, a collection of Epigrams, Satires, &c. 1598:

" *Porpentine*-backed, for he lies on thornes." STEEVENS.

8 Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.] As a proof that this play was written before 1597, of which the contrary has been asserted by Mr. Holt in Dr. Johnson's Appendix, I must borrow, as usual, from Dr. Farmer: " Shakspeare is said to have been no extraordinary actor; and that the top of his performance was the Ghost in his own Hamlet. Yet this *chef d'œuvre* did not please: I will give you an original stroke at it. Dr. Lodge published in the year 1596, a pamphlet called Wit's Miserie, or the World's Madness, discovering the incarnate Devils of the Age, quarto. One of these devils is, *Hate-virtue, or sorrow for another man's good successe*, who, says the doctor, is *a foule lubber*, and looks as pale as the vizard of the *Ghost*, which cried so miserably at the theatre, *Hamlet revenge*." STEEVENS.

I suspect that this stroke was levelled not at Shakspeare, but at the performer of the Ghost in an older play on this subject, exhibited before 1589. See An Attempt to ascertain the Order of Shakspeare's Plays. MALONE.

But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me * to know it; that I, with wings as swift

As meditation, or the thoughts of love[9],

May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;

And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed

That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf[1],

* First folio, *Haste, haste me.*

9 As meditation, or the thoughts of love,] This similitude is extremely beautiful. The word *meditation* is consecrated, by the *mysticks*, to signify that stretch and flight of mind which aspires to the enjoyment of the supreme good. So that Hamlet, considering with what to compare the swiftness of his revenge, chooses two of the most rapid things in nature, the ardency of divine and human passion, in an *enthusiast* and a *lover*.

WARBURTON.

The comment on the word *meditation* is so ingenious, that I hope it is just. JOHNSON.

1 And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed

That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,] Shakspeare, apparently through ignorance, makes Roman Catholicks of these Pagan Danes; and here gives a description of purgatory; but yet mixes it with the Pagan fable of Lethe's wharf. Whether he did it to insinuate to the zealous Protestants of his time, that the Pagan and Popish purgatory stood both upon the same footing of credibility, or whether it was by the same kind of licentious inadvertence that Michael Angelo brought Charon's bark into his picture of the Last Judgment, is not easy to decide. WARBURTON.

"That *roots* itself in ease," &c. Thus the quarto 1604. The folio reads—'That *rots* itself,' &c. I have preferred the reading of the original copy. Indeed in general the readings of the original copies, when not corrupt, ought, in my opinion, not to be departed from, without very strong reason. *That roots itself in ease*, means, *whose sluggish root is idly extended.*

The modern editors read—*Lethe's* wharf; but the reading of the old copy is right. So, in Sir Aston Cockain's Poems, 1658, p. 177:

"—— fearing these great actions might die,
"Neglected cast all into *Lethe lake*." MALONE.

"That *rots* itself in ease, &c." The quarto reads—That *roots* itself. Mr. Pope follows it. Otway has the same thought:

"—— like a coarse and useless dunghill weed
"Fix'd to one spot, and *rot* just as I grow."

Would'st thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
'Tis given out, that sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd: but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life,
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O, my prophetick soul! my uncle!

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit [2], with traitorous gifts,
(O wicked wit, and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!) won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming virtuous queen:
O, Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was [that of] dignity,
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage; and to decline
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!
But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven;
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,

Mr. Cowper also, in his version of the seventh Iliad, v. 100, has adopted this phrase of Shakspeare, to express—

Ἥμενοι αὖθι ἕκαστοι ἀκήριοι —.

"*Rot* where you sit." V. 112.

In Pope's Essay on Man, Ep. ii. 64, we meet with a similar comparison:

"Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,
"To draw nutrition, propagate, and *rot*."

The superiority of the reading of the folio is to me apparent: to be in a crescent state (i. e. to *root* itself) affords an idea of activity; to *rot* better suits with the dulness and inaction to which the Ghost refers. Beaumont and Fletcher have a thought somewhat similar in The Humorous Lieutenant:

"This *dull* root pluck'd from *Lethe's* flood." Steevens.

[2] — his WIT,] The old copies have *wits*. The subsequent line shows that it was a misprint. Malone.

And prey on garbage [3].
But, soft! methinks, I scent the morning air;
Brief let me be:—Sleeping within mine orchard [4],
My custom always of * the afternoon [5],
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon † in a vial [6],

* First folio, *in*. † Quarto, *hebona*.

[3] — sate itself in a celestial bed,
And PREY ON GARBAGE.] The same image occurs again in Cymbeline:

" ——— ravening first
" The lamb, *longs after for the garbage*." STEEVENS.

The same sentiment is expressed in a fragment of Euripides, Antiope, v. 86, edit. Barnes:

Κόρος δὲ πάντων, καὶ γὰρ ἐκ καλλιόνων
Λέκτροις ἐν αἰσχροῖς εἶδον ἐκπεπληγμένους.
Δαιτὸς δὲ πληρωθείς τις, ἄσμενος πάλιν
Φαύλη διαίτη προσβαλὼν ἥσθη στόμα. TODD.

[4] — mine ORCHARD,] *Orchard*, for *garden*. So, in Romeo and Juliet:

" The *orchard* walls are high, and hard to climb."
STEEVENS.

[5] — SLEEPING —
My custom always of the AFTERNOON,] See the Paston Letters, vol. iii. p. 282: " Written in my *sleeping time*, at *afternoon*," &c. See note on this passage. STEEVENS.

So, in Measure for Measure, Act III. Sc. I.:

" ——— Thou hast nor youth nor age;
" But as it were an *after-dinner's sleep*,
" Dreaming on both."

So, also, in Turberville's Tragical Tales, in the story of Alboyn, king of the Lumbards, who was murdered by his wife and her paramour:

" The king, as custome was,
" Because the day was hotte,
" *To take a nappe at after noone*,
" Into his chamber gotte." MALONE.

[6] With juice of cursed HEBENON in a vial,] The word here used was more probably designed by a *metathesis*, either of the poet or transcriber, for *henebon*, that is, *henbane*; of which the most common kind (*hyoscyamus niger*) is certainly *narcotick*, and perhaps, if taken in a considerable quantity, might prove poisonous. Galen calls it cold in the third degree; by which in this, as

And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous distilment[7]; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
That, swift as quicksilver, it courses through

well as *opium*, he seems not to mean an actual coldness, but the power it has of benumbing the faculties. Dioscorides ascribes to it the property of producing madness (ὑοσκυαμος μανιώδης). These qualities have been confirmed by several cases related in modern observations. In Wepfer we have a good account of the various effects of this root upon most of the members of a *convent* in Germany, who eat of it for supper by mistake, mixed with succory;—"heat in the throat, giddiness, dimness of sight, and delirium." *Cicut. Aquatic.* c. xviii. GREY.

So, in Drayton's Barons' Wars, p. 51:

"The pois'ning *henbane*, and the mandrake drad."

Again, in the Philosopher's 4th Satire of Mars, by Robert Anton, 1616:

"The poison'd *henbane*, whose cold juice doth kill."

In Marlowe's Jew of Malta, 1633, the word is written in a different manner:

"——— the blood of Hydra, Lerna's bane,
"The juice of *hebon*, and Cocytus' breath." STEEVENS.

Dr. Grey had ingeniously supposed this word to be a *metathesis* for *henebon* or *henbane;* but the best part of his note on the subject has been omitted, which is his reference to Pliny, who says that the oil of henbane *dropped into the ears* disturbs the brain. Yet it does not appear that *henbane* was ever called *henebon*. The line cited by Mr. Steevens from Marlowe's Jew of Malta, shows that the *juice* of *hebon*, i. e. *ebony*, was accounted poisonous; and in the English edition by Batman, of Bartholomæus de Proprietatibus Rerum, so often cited in these observations as a Shakspearian book, the article for the wood ebony is entitled, "Of *Ebeno*, chap. 52." This comes so near to the text, [particularly that of the quarto,] that it is presumed very little doubt will now remain on the occasion. It is not surprising that the *dropping into the ears* should occur, because Shakspeare was perfectly well acquainted with the supposed properties of henbane as recorded in Holland's translation of Pliny and elsewhere, and might apply this mode of use to any other poison. DOUCE.

[7] The leperous DISTILMENT;] So, in Painter's Palace of Pleasure, vol. ii. p. 142: "—which being once possessed, never leaveth the patient till it hath enfeebled his state, like the qualitie of *poison distilling* through the veins even to the heart." MALONE.

Surely, "the leperous *distilment*" signifies the water *distilled* from henbane, that subsequently occasioned leprosy. STEEVENS.

The natural gates and alleys of the body;
And, with a sudden vigour, it doth posset *
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
And a most instant tetter bark'd † about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.
Thus was I, sleeping by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of ‡ queen, at once despatch'd [8]:
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin [9],
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd § [1];

* Quarto, *possess*. † First folio, *bak'd*. ‡ First folio, *and*.
§ Quarto, *unanused*; first folio, *unnanel'd*.

[8] — at once DESPATCH'D:] *Despatch'd*, for *bereft*. WARBURTON.

[9] Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin, &c.] The very words of this part of the speech are taken (as I have been informed by a gentleman of undoubted veracity) from an old Legend of Saints, where a man, who was accidentally drowned, is introduced as making the same complaint. STEEVENS.

[1] Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd;] *Unhousel'd* is 'without having received the sacrament.'

Disappointed, as Dr. Johnson observes, "is the same as *unappointed*, and may be properly explained *unprepared*. A man well furnished with things necessary for an enterprise, was said to be well *appointed*."

This explanation of *disappointed* may be countenanced by a quotation of Mr. Upton's from Measure for Measure:

"Therefore your best *appointment* make with speed."

Isabella, as Mr. Malone remarks, is the speaker, and her brother, who was condemned to die, is the person addressed.

Unanel'd is 'without extreme unction.'

I shall now subjoin as many notes as are necessary for the support of the first and third of these explanations. I administer the bark only, not supposing any reader will be found who is desirous to swallow the whole tree.

In the Textus Roffensis, we meet with two of these words—"The monks offering themselves to perform all priestly functions of *houseling*, and *aveyling*." *Aveyling* is misprinted for *aneyling*. STEEVENS.

See Mort d'Arthur, p. iii. c. 175: "So when he was *houseled* and *aneled*, and had all that a Christian man ought to have," &c. TYRWHITT.

No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head:
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible[2]!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be

" The subsequent extract from a very scarce and curious copy of Fabian's Chronicle, printed by Pynson, 1516, seems to remove every possibility of doubt concerning the true signification of the words *unhousel'd* and *unanel'd*. The historian, speaking of Pope Innocent's having laid the whole kingdom of England under an interdict, has these words: "Of the manner of this interdiccion of this lande have I seen dyverse opynyons, as some ther be that saye that the lande was interdyted thorwly and the churchis and housys of relygyon closyd, that no where was used mase, nor dyvyne servyce, by whiche reason none of the VII sacramentis all this terme should be mynystred or occupyed, nor chyld *crystened*, nor man *confessed* nor *marryed*; but it was not so strayght. For there were dyverse placys in Englond, which were occupyed with dyvyne servyce all that season by lycence purchased than or before, also chyldren were chrystenyd throughe all the lande and men *houselyd* and *anelyd*." Fol. 14, *Septima Pars Johannis*.

The Anglo-Saxon noun-substantives *husel* (the eucharist), and *ele* (oil), are plainly the roots of these last-quoted compound adjectives.—For the meaning of the affix *an* to the last, I quote Spelman's Gloss. in loco: "Quin et dictionibus (an) adjungitur, siquidem vel *majoris notationis* gratia, vel ad *singulare aliquid*, vel *unicum* demonstrandum." Hence *anelyd* should seem to signify *oiled* or *anointed* by way of eminence, i. e. having received extreme unction. For the confirmation of the sense given here, there is the strongest internal evidence in the passage. The historian is speaking of the VII sacraments, and he expressly names five of them, viz. baptism, marriage, auricular confession, the *eucharist*, and *extreme unction*.

The antiquary is desired to consult the edition of Fabian, printed by Pynson, 1516, because there are others, and I remember to have seen one in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, with a continuation to the end of Queen Mary, London, 1559, in which the language is much modernized. BRAND.

[2] O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!] It was ingeniously hinted to me by a very learned lady, that this line seems to belong to Hamlet, in whose mouth it is a proper and natural exclamation; and who, according to the practice of the stage, may be supposed to interrupt so long a speech. JOHNSON.

A couch for luxury[3] and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught; leave her to heaven,
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire[4]:
Adieu, adieu, adieu *! remember me[5]. [*Exit.*

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?
And shall I couple hell?—O fye[6]!—Hold, hold, my heart;

* First folio, *Adieu, adieu, Hamlet.*

[3] —a couch for LUXURY —] i. e. for *lewdness*. So, in K. Lear:
"To't *luxury*, pell-mell, for I lack soldiers." STEEVENS.
See Troilus and Cressida, Act V. Sc. II. MALONE.

[4] —pale his uneffectual fire;] i. e. shining without heat.
WARBURTON.

To *pale* is a verb used by Lady Elizabeth Carew, in her Tragedy of Mariam, 1613:

"Death can *pale* as well
"A cheek of roses, as a cheek less bright."

Again, in Urry's Chaucer, p. 368: "The sterre *paleth* her white cheres by the flambes of the sonne," &c.

Uneffectual fire, I believe, rather means, fire that is no longer seen when the light of morning approaches. So, in Pericles, Prince of Tyre, 1609:

"——— like a *glow-worm*,—
"The which hath fire in darkness, none in light."
STEEVENS.

[5] Adieu, adieu, adieu! &c.] The folio reads—
"Adieu, adieu, *Hamlet*, remember me." STEEVENS.

[6] —O fye!] These words (which hurt the measure, and from that circumstance, and their almost ludicrous turn, may be suspected as an interpolation,) are found only in the two earliest quartos.

"O fye!" however, might have been the marginal reprehension of some scrupulous reader, to whom the MS. had been communicated before it found its way to the press. STEEVENS.

This line in Mr. Malone's first folio is thus:

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly * up!—Remember thee?
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe[7]. Remember thee?
Yea, from the table of my memory[8]
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter: yes †, by heaven.
O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables ‡,—meet it is, I set it down[9],

* Quarto, *swiftly*. † First folio, *yes, yes.*
‡ First folio, *My tables, my tables.*

"And shall I couple hell? oh fie: hold my heart."
The ludicrous words, as Mr. Steevens chooses to term them, are found in a subsequent speech of Hamlet, Act II. Sc. II. near the close:

"Fye upon't! foh! about my brains."

So also, p. 202:

"Fye on't! oh fye! 'tis an unweeded garden." BOSWELL.

7 ——— Remember thee?
Ay, thou poor ghost, WHILE MEMORY HOLDS A SEAT
IN THIS DISTRACTED GLOBE.] So, in our poet's 122d Sonnet:

"Which shall above that idle rank remain,
"Beyond all dates, even to eternity;
"Or at the least, *so long as brain and heart*
"*Have faculty by nature to subsist.*" MALONE.

"——this distracted globe," i. e. in this head confused with thought. STEEVENS.

8 Yea, from THE TABLE OF MY MEMORY—] This expression is used by Sir Philip Sidney in his Defence of Poesie.
So, in Golding's Translation of Abraham's Sacrifice, by Beza:

"Let not this trew and noble storie part
"Out of *the mind and tables of your heart.*" MALONE.

"——from the table of my memory I'll *wipe away*, &c." This phrase will remind the reader of Chæria's exclamation in the Eunuch of Terence;—"O faciem pulchram! *deleo* omnes dehinc ex animo mulieres." STEEVENS.

9 My TABLES,—meet it is, I set it down,] This is a ridicule on the practice of the time. Hall says, in his character of the

That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark:
[*Writing.*
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word[1];
It is, *Adieu, adieu! remember me.*

Hypocrite, "He will ever sit where he may be seene best, and in the midst of the sermon pulles out his *tables* in haste, as if he feared to loose that note," &c. FARMER.

No ridicule on the practice of the time could with propriety be introduced on this occasion. Hamlet avails himself of the same caution observed by the Doctor in the fifth Act of Macbeth: "I will set down whatever comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly."

Dr. Farmer's remark, however, as to the frequent use of table-books, may be supported by many instances. So, in the Induction to The Malcontent, 1604: "I tell you I am one that hath seen this play often, and give them intelligence for their action: I have most of the jests of it here in my *table-book*."

Again, in Love's Sacrifice, 1633:

"You are one loves courtship:
"You had some change of words; 'twere no lost labour
"To stuff your *table-books*."

Again, in Antonio's Revenge, 1602: Balurdo draws out his *writing-tables* and writes—

"*Retort* and *obtuse*, good words, very good words."

Again, in Every Woman in her Humour, 1609:

"Let your *tables* befriend your memory; write," &c.
STEEVENS.

See also The Second Part of Henry IV.:

"And therefore will he wipe his *tables* clean,
"And keep no *tell-tale* to his *memory*."

York is here speaking of the King. *Table-books* in the time of our author appear to have been used by all ranks of people. In the church they were filled with short notes of the sermon, and at the theatre with the sparkling sentences of the play. MALONE.

I am in possession of three of these *table-books:* one printed in 1604, the date of the first edition of Hamlet: "Writing Tables, with a Kalendar for xxiiii. Yeares, &c. The Tables made by Robert Triplet. London. Imprinted for the Companie of Stationers, 1604." BOSWELL.

[1] —— Now to my word;] Hamlet alludes to the *watch-word* given every day in military service, which at this time he says is, *Adieu, adieu! remember me.* So, in The Devil's Charter, a tragedy, 1607:

"Now to my *watch-word*——." STEEVENS.

I have sworn't.

Hor. [*Within.*] My lord, my lord,——

Mar. [*Within.*] Lord Hamlet,——

Hor. [*Within.*] Heaven secure him!

Ham. * So be it!

Mar. † [*Within.*] Illo, ho, ho, my lord!

Ham. Hillo [2], ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come [3].

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord?

Hor. What news, my lord?

Ham. O, wonderful!

Hor. Good my lord, tell it.

Ham. No;
You will reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven.

Mar. Nor I, my lord.

Ham. How say you then; would heart of man once think it?—
But you'll be secret,——

Hor. Mar. Ay, by heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er ‡ a villain, dwelling in all Denmark,

* First folio, *Mar.* † First folio, *Hor.* ‡ Quarto, *never.*

[2] Hillo,—] This exclamation is of French origin. So, in the Venerie de Jacques Fouilloux, 1635, 4to. p. 12: "Ty a hillaut, &c. STEEVENS.

[3] —— come, bird, come.] This is the call which falconers use to their hawk in the air, when they would have him come down to them. HANMER.

This expression is used in Marston's Dutch Courtezan, and by many others among the old dramatick writers.

It appears from these passages, that it was the falconer's call, as Sir T. Hanmer has observed.

Again, in Tyro's Roaring Megge, planted against the Walls of Melancholy, &c. 4to. 1598:

"Yet, ere I iournie, Ile go see the kyte:
"*Come, come bird, come:* pox on you, can you mute?"

STEEVENS.

But he's an arrant knave.

Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave,
To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right; you are in the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit, that we shake hands, and part:
You, as your business, and desire, shall point you;—
For every man hath business and desire,
Such as it is,—and, for my own poor part,
Look you *, I will go pray.

Hor. These are but wild and whirling † words, my lord.

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily; yes, 'Faith, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick [4], but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,—
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you;
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'er-master it as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is't, my lord? we will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night.

* Quarto omits *look you*. † First folio, *hurling*.

[4] —— by Saint Patrick,] How the poet comes to make Hamlet swear by *St. Patrick*, I know not. However, at this time all the whole northern world had their learning from Ireland; to which place it had retired, and there flourished under the auspices of this saint. But it was, I suppose, only said at random; for he makes Hamlet a student at Wittenberg. Warburton.

Dean Swift's "Verses on the sudden drying-up of St. Patrick's Well, 1726," contain many learned allusions to the early cultivation of literature in Ireland. Nichols.

Hor. Mar. My lord, we will not.
Ham. Nay, but swear't.
Hor. In faith,
My lord, not I.
Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.
Ham. Upon my sword.
Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.
Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.
Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.
Ham. Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, true-penny[5]?
Come on,—you hear this fellow in the cellarage,—
Consent to swear.
Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.
Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword[6].

[5] —— true-penny?] This word, as well as some of Hamlet's former exclamations, we find in The Malcontent, 1604:

"Illo, ho, ho, ho; art thou there old *True-penny?*"

STEEVENS.

[6] —— Swear by my sword.] Here the poet has preserved the manners of the ancient Danes, with whom it was *religion* to swear upon their swords. See Bartholinus, De causis contempt. mort. apud Dan. WARBURTON.

I was once inclinable to this opinion, which is likewise well defended by Mr. Upton; but Mr. Garrick produced me a passage, I think, in Brantome, from which it appeared that it was common to swear upon the sword, that is, upon the cross, which the old swords always had upon the hilt. JOHNSON.

Shakspeare, it is more than probable, knew nothing of the ancient Danes, or their manners. Every extract from Dr. Farmer's pamphlet must prove as instructive to the reader as the following:

"In the Passus Primus of Pierce Plowman,

'David in his daies dubbed knightes,
'And did them *swere on her sword* to serve truth ever.'

"And in Hieronymo, the common butt of our author, and the wits of the time, says Lorenzo to Pedringano:

'Swear on this *cross*, that what thou say'st is true:
'But if I prove thee perjur'd and unjust,
'This very *sword*, whereon thou took'st thine oath,
'Shall be a worker of thy tragedy.'"

To the authorities produced by Dr. Farmer, the following may

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. *Hic et ubique?* then we'll shift our ground:—
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword:
Swear by my sword,
Never to speak of this that you have heard.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear by his sword *.

Ham. Well said, old mole! can'st work i'the earth † so fast?

* First folio omits *by his sword.* † First folio, *ground.*

be added from Holinshed, p. 664: "Warwick kissed the *cross* of King Edward's sword, as it were a vow to his promise."

Again, p. 1038, it is said—"that Warwick drew out his sword, which other of the honourable and worshipful that were then present likewise did, when he commanded that each one should kiss other's sword, according to an ancient custom amongst men of war in time of great danger; and herewith they made a solemn vow," &c.

Again, in Decker's comedy of Old Fortunatus, 1600:

"He has sworn to me on the *cross* of his pure Toledo."

Again, in his Satiromastix: "By the *cross* of this sword and dagger, captain, you shall take it."

In the soliloquy of Roland addressed to his sword, the *cross* on it is not forgotten: "—capulo eburneo candidissime, *cruce* aurea splendidissime," &c. Turpini Hist. de Gestis Caroli Mag. cap. 22.

Again, in an ancient MS. of which some account is given in a note on the first scene of the first Act of The Merry Wives of Windsor, the oath taken by a *master of defence* when his degree was conferred on him, is preserved, and runs as follows: "First you shall sweare (so help you God and halidome, and by all the christendome which God gave you at the fount-stone, and by the *crosse of this sword which doth represent unto you the crosse which our Saviour suffered his most payneful deathe upon,*) that you shall upholde, maynteyne, and kepe to your power all soch articles as shall be heare declared unto you, and receve in the presence of me your maister, and these the rest of the maisters my brethren heare with me at this tyme." Steevens.

Spenser observes that the Irish in his time used commonly to swear by their sword. See his View of the State of Ireland, written in 1596. This custom, indeed, is of the highest antiquity; having prevailed, as we learn from Lucian, among the Scythians. Malone.

A worthy pioneer!—Once more remove, good
friends.

Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous
strange!

Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome[7].

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your * philosophy.
But come;——
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy!
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,
As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet
To put an antick disposition on,—
That you, at such times † seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As, *Well, well, we know*;—or, *We could, an if we would*;—or, *If we list to speak*;—or, *There be, an if they might*[8];—
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me:—This not to do,
swear;
So grace and mercy at your most need help you[9]!

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

* First folio, *our*. † First folio, *time*.

7 And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.] i. e. receive it to yourself; take it under your own roof; as much as to say, *Keep it secret*. Alluding to the laws of hospitality. Warburton.

Warburton refines too much on this passage. Hamlet means merely to request that they would seem not to know it—to be unacquainted with it. M. Mason.

8 —— an if THEY might;] Thus the quarto. The folio reads —an if *there* might. Malone.

9 That you know aught of me:—This not to do, swear;
So grace and mercy at your most need help you!]
This passage is thus given in the quarto:

"That you know aught of me:—This do swear,
"So grace and mercy at your most need help you."

Boswell.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit[2]! So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you:
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, to express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint;—O cursed spite!
That ever I was born to set it right.
Nay, come, let's go together. [*Exeunt.*

[2] Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!] The skill displayed in Shakspeare's management of his Ghost, is too considerable to be overlooked. He has rivetted our attention to it by a succession of forcible circumstances:—by the previous report of the terrified centinels,—by the solemnity of the hour at which the phantom walks,—by its martial stride and discriminating armour, visible only *per incertam lunam*, by the glimpses of the moon,—by its long taciturnity,—by its preparation to speak, when interrupted by the morning cock,—by its mysterious reserve throughout its first scene with Hamlet,—by his resolute departure with it, and the subsequent anxiety of his attendants,—by its conducting him to a solitary angle of the platform,—by its voice from beneath the earth,—and by its unexpected burst on us in the closet.

Hamlet's late interview with the spectre, must in particular be regarded as a stroke of dramatick artifice. The phantom might have told his story in the presence of the Officers and Horatio, and yet have rendered itself as inaudible to them, as afterwards to the Queen. But suspense was our poet's object; and never was it more effectually created, than in the present instance. Six times has the royal semblance appeared, but till now has been withheld from speaking. For this event we have waited with impatient curiosity, unaccompanied by lassitude, or remitted attention.

The Ghost in this tragedy, is allowed to be the genuine product of Shakspeare's strong imagination. When he afterwards avails himself of traditional phantoms, as in Julius Cæsar, and King Richard III. they are but inefficacious pageants; nay, the apparition of Banquo is a mute exhibitor. Perhaps our poet despaired to equal the vigour of his early conceptions on the subject of preter-natural beings, and therefore allotted them no further eminence in his dramas; or was unwilling to diminish the power of his principal shade, by an injudicious repetition of congenial images. STEEVENS.

ACT II. SCENE I.

A Room in POLONIUS's House.

Enter POLONIUS and REYNALDO[3].

POL. Give him this money, and these notes, Reynaldo.
REY. I will, my lord.
POL. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to * make inquiry †
Of his behaviour.
REY. My lord, I did intend it.
POL. Marry, well said: very well said[4]. Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers[5] are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expence; and finding,
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it[6]:

* First folio, *you*. † Quarto, *inquire*.

3 *Enter Polonius and Reynaldo.*] The quartos read—"*Enter old Polonius with his man or two.*" STEEVENS.

4 — well said: very well said.] Thus also, the weak and tedious Shallow says to Bardolph, in The Second Part of King Henry IV. Act III. Sc. II.: "It is well said, sir; and it is well said indeed too." STEEVENS.

5 — Danskers —] *Danske* (in Warner's Albion's England) is the ancient name of Denmark. STEEVENS.

6 — come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it:] The late editions read, and point, thus:
"—— come you more nearer;
"*Then* your particular demands will touch it:"
Throughout the old copies the word which we now write—*than*, is frequently written—*then*. I have printed—*than*, which

Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him;
As * thus,—*I know his father, and his friends,*
And, in part, him ;—Do you mark this, Reynaldo?

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Pol. And, in part, him;—but, you may say, *not well:*

But, if't be he I mean, he's very wild;
Addicted so and so ;—and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him; take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing[7], quarrelling,
Drabbing:—You may go so far.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge[8].
You must not put another scandal on him[9],

* First folio, *And thus.*

the context seems to me to require, after the second folio. There is no point after the word *nearer*, either in the original quarto 1604, or the folio. MALONE.

7 — drinking, FENCING, swearing,] I suppose, by *fencing* is meant a too diligent frequentation of the fencing-school, a resort of violent and lawless young men. JOHNSON.

Fencing, I suppose, means, piquing himself on his skill in the use of the sword, and quarrelling and brawling, in consequence of that skill. "The cunning of *fencers*, (says Gosson, in his Schoole of Abuse, 1579,) is now applied to *quarreling:* they thinke themselves no men, if for stirring of a straw, they prove not their valure uppon some bodies fleshe." MALONE.

8 'Faith, NO; as you may season it, &c.] The quarto reads—
"Faith, as you may season it in the charge." MALONE.

9 — ANOTHER scandal on him,] Thus the old editions. Mr. Theobald reads—"*an utter.*" JOHNSON.

"— *another* scandal —." i. e. a very different and more scandalous failing, namely, habitual incontinency. Mr. Theobald in

That he is open to incontinency;
That's not my meaning[1]: but breathe his faults so quaintly,
That they may seem the taints of liberty:
The flash and out-break of a fiery mind;
A savageness[2] in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault[3].

Rey. But, my good lord,——

Pol. Wherefore should you do this?

Rey. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.

Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant[4]:
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i'the working *
Mark you,
Your party in convèrse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes[5],
The youth you breathe of, guilty, be assur'd,
He closes with you in this consequence;
Good sir, or so[6]: or *friend*, or *gentleman*,—
According to the phrase, or † the addition,
Of man, and country.

Rey. Very good, my lord.

* Quarto, *with working*. † First folio, *and*.

his Shakspeare Restored proposed to read—'*an utter* scandal on him;' but did not admit the emendation into his edition. Malone.

[1] That's not my meaning:] That is not what I mean when I permit you to accuse him of drabbing. M. Mason.

[2] A savageness —] *Savageness*, for *wildness*. Warburton.

[3] Of general assault.] i. e. such as youth in general is liable to. Warburton.

[4] And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:] So the folio. The quarto reads—"a fetch of *wit*." Steevens.

[5] — prenominate crimes,] i. e. crimes already named. Steevens.

[6] *Good sir*, or so;] In the last Act of this play, *so* is used for *so forth*: "— six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hanger, and *so*." Malone.

Pol. And then, sir, does he this,—He does—
What was I about to say?—By the mass *, I was
about to say something:—Where did I leave?
Rey. At closes in the consequence.
Pol. At, closes in the consequence [7],—Ay, marry;
He closes with you † thus:—*I know the gentleman;*
I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you
say,
There was he gaming; there o'ertook‡ in his rouse;
There falling out at tennis: or perchance,
I saw him enter such a house of sale,
(*Videlicet*, a brothel,) *or so forth.*—
See you now;
Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlaces, and with assays of bias,
By indirections find directions out;
So, by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son: You have me, have you not?
Rey. My lord, I have.
Pol. God be wi' you; fare you well.
Rey. Good my lord,——
Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself [8].
Rey. I shall, my lord.
Pol. And let him ply his musick.

* First folio omits *by the mass.* † Quarto omits *with you.*
‡ Quarto, *or took.*

[7] At, closes in the consequence,] Thus the quarto. The folio adds—"At friend, or so, and gentleman." MALONE.

[8] — IN yourself.] Sir T. Hanmer reads—*e'en* yourself, and is followed by Dr. Warburton; but perhaps *in* yourself, means, *in your own person, not by spies.* JOHNSON.

The meaning seems to be—The temptations you feel, suspect in him, and be watchful of them. So, in a subsequent scene:

"For by the image of my cause, I see
"The portraiture of his."

Again, in Timon:

"I weigh my friend's affection with my own." C.

Rey. Well, my lord.
[*Exit.*

Enter Ophelia.

Pol. Farewell!—How now, Ophelia? what's the matter?

Oph. O, my lord, my lord *, I have been so affrighted!

Pol. With what, in the name of heaven?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet †,
Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbrac'd;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle [9];
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport,
As if he had been loosed out of hell,
To speak of horrors,—he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My lord, I do not know;
But, truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm;
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face,
As he would draw it. Long staid he so;
At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—
He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound,
As it ‡ did seem to shatter all his bulk [1],

* First folio, *Alas, my lord, I have.* † First folio, *chamber.*
‡ First folio, *That it.*

9 Ungarter'd and down-GYVED to his ancle;] *Down-gyved* means, hanging down like the loose cincture which confines the fetters round the ancles. STEEVENS.

Thus the quartos 1604 and 1605, and the folio. In the quarto of 1611, the word *gyved* was changed to *gyred*. MALONE.

1 — all his BULK,] i. e. all his body. So, in the Rape of Lucrece:

And end his being: That done, he lets me go:
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out o'doors he went without their help*,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.

Pol. Come, go with me; I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy of love:
Whose violent property foredoes itself[2],
And leads the will to desperate undertakings,
As oft as any passion under heaven,
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry,—
What, have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord; but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters, and denied
His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.
I am sorry, that with better heed and judgment,
I had not quoted him[3]: I fear'd, he did but trifle,

* Quarto, *helps*.

" ——— her heart
" Beating her *bulk*, that his hand shakes with all."

So, in Richard III. Act I. Sc. IV.:

" ——— But still the envious flood
" Kept in my soul, and would not let it forth,
" But smother'd it within my parting *bulk*." MALONE.

Bulk, is not, I think, all his *body*, but his *breast*. Johnson derives it from *bulke*, Dutch, which has that meaning. *Petto-rata*, in Florio, is explained, "a shock against the breast or *bulk*."
BOSWELL.

[2] — FOREDOES itself,] To *foredo* is to *destroy*. So, in Othello:
" That either makes me, or *foredoes* me quite."
STEEVENS.

[3] I had not QUOTED him:] To *quote* is, I believe, to *reckon*, to *take an account of*, to take the *quotient* or result of a computation. JOHNSON.

I find a passage in The Isle of Gulls, a comedy, by John Day, 1606, which proves Dr. Johnson's sense of the word to be not far from the true one:

" ——'twill be a scene of mirth
" For me to *quote* his passions, and his smiles."

And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!
It seems, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion[4]. Come, go we to the king:
This must be known; which, being kept close, might move

To *quote* on this occasion undoubtedly means to *observe*. Again, in Drayton's Mooncalf:

"This honest man the prophecy that noted,
"And things therein most curiously had *quoted*,
"Found all these signs," &c.

Again, in The Woman Hater, by Beaumont and Fletcher, the intelligencer says,—"I'll *quote* him to a tittle," i. e. I will mark or observe him.

To *quote*, as Mr. M. Mason observes, is invariably used by Shakspeare in this sense. STEEVENS.

So, in The Rape of Lucrece:

"Yea, the illiterate —
"Will *quote* my loathed trespass in my looks."

In this passage, in the original edition of 1594, the word is written *cote*, as it is in the quarto copy of this play. It is merely the old or corrupt spelling of the word, which frequently occurs in these plays. In Minsheu's Dict. 1617, we find, "To *quote*, mark, or note, á *quotus*. Numeris enim scribentes sententias suas *notant* et distinguunt." See also, Cotgrave's Dict. 1611: "Quoter. To *quote* or *marke* in the margent; to note by the way." MALONE.

[4] — it is as proper to our age
To CAST beyond ourselves in our opinions,
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion.] This is not the remark of a weak man. The vice of age is too much suspicion. Men long accustomed to the wiles of life *cast* commonly *beyond themselves*, let their cunning go farther than reason can attend it. This is always the fault of a little mind, made artful by long commerce with the world. JOHNSON.

The quartos read—"*By heaven* it is as proper," &c. STEEVENS.

In Decker's Wonderful Yeare, 4to. 1603, we find an expression similar to that in the text: "Now the thirstie citizen *casts beyond* the moone." MALONE.

The same phrase occurs also in Titus Andronicus. REED.

More grief to hide, than hate to utter love[5].
Come*. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and Attendants.

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern!
Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need, we have to use you, did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
Since not† the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was: What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream‡ of: I entreat you both,
That,—being of so young days brought up with him:
And, since, so neighbour'd to his youth and humour§[6],—
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court

* First folio omits *Come.*
† Quarta, *sith nor.*
‡ First folio, *deeme.*
§ Quarto, *haviour.*

[5] This must be known; which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.] i. e. this must be made known to the King, for (being kept secret) the hiding Hamlet's love might occasion more mischief to us from him and the Queen, than the uttering or revealing of it will occasion hate and resentment from Hamlet. The poet's ill and obscure expression seems to have been caused by his affectation of concluding the scene with a couplet.
Sir T. Hanmer reads:
"More grief to *hide hate, than* to utter love." JOHNSON.

[6] — and HUMOUR,] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*haviour.* STEEVENS.

Some little time: so by your companies
To draw him on to pleasures; and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught[7], to us unknown, afflicts him thus,
That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you;
And, sure I am, two men there are not living,
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much gentry[8], and good will,
As to expend your time with us a while,
For the supply and profit of our hope[9],
Your visitation shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us[1],
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But * we both obey;
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent[2],
To lay our service † freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guildenstern.

* First folio omits *But*. † First folio, *services*.

7 Whether aught, &c.] This line is omitted in the folio. Steevens.

8 To show us so much GENTRY,] *Gentry*, for *complaisance*. Warburton.

9 For the supply, &c.] That the hope which your arrival has raised may be completed by the desired effect. Johnson.

1 — you have OF us,] I believe we should read—*o'er* us, instead of—*of* us. M. Mason.

2 — in the full BENT,] *Bent*, for *endeavour*, *application*. Warburton.

The full bent, *is* the utmost extremity of exertion. The allusion is to a bow bent as far as it will go. So afterwards, in this play:

"They fool me to *top* of my *bent*." Malone.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosencrantz:
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son.—Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.
Guil. Heavens make our presence, and our practices,
Pleasant and helpful to him!
Queen. Ay, amen!
[*Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and some Attendants.*

Enter Polonius.

Pol. The embassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.
King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.
Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king:
And I do think, (or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy [3] so sure
As it hath * us'd to do,) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.
King. O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.
Pol. Give first admittance to the embassadors;
My news shall be the fruit † [4] to that great feast.
King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in. [*Exit Polonius.*
He tells me, my dear Gertrude ‡, he hath found

* First folio, *As I have.* † First folio, *news.*
‡ First folio, *He tells me, my sweet queen, that.*

[3] —the TRAIL of policy —] The *trail* is the *course of an animal pursued by the scent.* JOHNSON.
[4] —the fruit —] The *desert* after the meat. JOHNSON.

The head and source of all your son's distemper.

QUEEN. I doubt, it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

Re-enter POLONIUS, *with* VOLTIMAND *and* CORNELIUS.

KING. Well, we shall sift him.—Welcome, my good friends!
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

VOLT. Most fair return of greetings, and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness: Whereat griev'd,—
That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
Was falsely borne in hand [5],—sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
Receives rebuke from Norway; and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle, never more
To give th'assay [6] of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee [7];

[5] —borne in hand,] i. e. deceived, imposed on. So, in Macbeth, Act III.:

"How you were *borne in hand*, how cross'd," &c.

STEEVENS.

[6] To give the assay —] To *take the assay* was a technical expression, originally applied to those who tasted wine for princes and great men. See King Lear, Act V. Sc. III. MALONE.

[7] Gives him THREE thousand crowns in annual fee;] This reading first obtained in the edition put out by the players. But all the old quartos (from 1605, downwards,) read *threescore*.

THEOBALD.

The metre is destroyed by the alteration: and threescore thousand crowns, in the days of Hamlet, was an enormous sum of money. M. MASON.

"——annual *fee;*" *Fee* in this place signifies *reward, recompence.* So, in All's Well that Ends Well:

"——Not helping, death's my *fee;*
"But if I help, what do you promise me?"

And his commission, to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack:
With an entreaty, herein further shown,
[*Gives a Paper.*
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprize;
On such regards of safety, and allowance,
As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well;
And, at our more consider'd time, we'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business.
Mean time, we thank you for your well-took labour:
Go to your rest; at night we'll feast [8] together:
Most welcome home!
[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*

Pol. This business is well ended.
My liege, and madam, to expostulate [9]

The word is commonly used in Scotland, for *wages*, as we say, *lawyer's fee*, *physician's fee*. Steevens.

Fee is defined by Minsheu, in his Dict. 1617, a *reward*. Malone.

I have restored the reading of the folio. Mr. Ritson explains it, I think, rightly, thus: the King gave his nephew a *feud* or *fee* (in land) of that yearly value. Reed.

[8] —at night we'll feast—] The King's intemperance is never suffered to be forgotten. Johnson.

[9] My liege, and madam, to expostulate—] To *expostulate*, for to *enquire* or *discuss*.

The strokes of humour in this speech are admirable. Polonius's character is that of a weak, pedant, minister of state. His declamation is a fine satire on the impertinent oratory then in vogue, which placed reason in the formality of method, and wit in the gingle and play of words. With what art is he made to pride himself in his *wit*:

"*That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true, 'tis pity:*
"*And pity 'tis, 'tis true:* A foolish figure;
"But farewell it——."

And how exquisitely does the poet ridicule the *reasoning in fashion*, where he makes Polonius remark on Hamlet's madness:

"Though this be *madness*, yet there's *method* in't:"

As if method, which the wits of that age thought the most essential quality of a good discourse, would make amends for the mad-

What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night, night, and time is time,

ness. It was *madness* indeed, yet Polonius could comfort himself with this reflection, that at least it was *method*. It is certain Shakspeare excels in nothing more than in the preservation of his characters: *To this life and variety of character* (says our great poet [Pope] in his admirable preface to Shakspeare,) *we must add the wonderful preservation.* We have said what is the character of Polonius; and it is allowed on all hands to be drawn with wonderful life and spirit, yet the *unity* of it has been thought by some to be grossly violated in the excellent *precepts* and *instructions* which Shakspeare makes his statesman give his son and servant in the middle of the *first*, and beginning of the *second act*. But I will venture to say, these criticks have not entered into the poet's art and address in this particular. He had a mind to ornament his scenes with those fine lessons of social life; but his Polonius was too weak to be author of them, though he was pedant enough to have met with them in his reading, and fop enough to get them by heart, and retail them for his own. And this the poet has finely shown us was the case, where, in the middle of Polonius's instructions to his servant, he makes him, though without having received any interruption, forget his lesson, and say—

"And then, sir, does he this;
"He does——What was I about to say?
"I was about to say something——where did I leave?"

The Servant replies:

At, *closes in the consequence.* This sets Polonius right, and he goes on—

"At *closes in the consequence.*
"——Ay, marry,
"He closes thus: ——*I know the gentleman,*" &c.

which shows the very words got by heart which he was repeating. Otherwise *closes in the consequence*, which conveys no particular idea of the subject he was upon, could never have made him recollect where he broke off. This is an extraordinary instance of the poet's art, and attention to the preservation of character.

WARBURTON.

This account of the character of Polonius, though it sufficiently reconciles the seeming inconsistency of so much wisdom with so much folly, does not perhaps correspond exactly to the ideas of our author. The commentator makes the character of Polonius, a character only of manners, discriminated by properties superficial, accidental, and acquired. The poet intended a nobler delineation of a mixed character of manners and of nature. Polonius is a man bred in courts, exercised in business,

Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief: Your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it: for, to define true madness,
What is't, but to be nothing else but mad:
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear, I use no art at all.

stored with observation, confident in his knowledge, proud of his eloquence, and declining into dotage. His mode of oratory is truly represented as designed to ridicule the practice of those times, of prefaces that made no introduction, and of method that embarrassed rather than explained. This part of his character is accidental, the rest is natural. Such a man is positive and confident, because he knows that his mind was once strong, and knows not that it is become weak. Such a man excels in general principles, but fails in the particular application. He is knowing in retrospect, and ignorant in foresight. While he depends upon his memory, and can draw from his repositories of knowledge, he utters weighty sentences, and gives useful counsel; but as the mind in its enfeebled state cannot be kept long busy and intent, the old man is subject to sudden dereliction of his faculties, he loses the order of his ideas, and entangles himself in his own thoughts, till he recovers the leading principle, and falls again into his former train. This idea of dotage encroaching upon wisdom, will solve all the phænomena of the character of Polonius. Johnson.

This admirable note may be illustrated by a passage which Johnson has highly praised in Love's Labour's Lost, Act V. Sc. II.:

" *Prin.* None are so surely caught, when they are catch'd,
" As wit turn'd fool: folly, in wisdom hatch'd,
" Hath wisdom's warrant, and the help of school;
" And wit's own grace, to grace a learned fool.
" *Ros.* The blood of youth burns not with such excess,
" As gravity's revolt to wantonness.
" *Mar.* Folly in fools bears not so strong a note,
" As foolery in the wise, when wit doth dote." Malone.

Nothing can be more just, judicious, and masterly, than Johnson's delineation of the character of Polonius; and I cannot read it without heartily regretting that he did not exert his great abilities and discriminating powers, in delineating the strange, inconsistent, and indecisive character of Hamlet, to which I confess myself unequal. M. Mason.

That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true, 'tis pity;
And pity 'tis, 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then: and now remains,
That we find out the cause of this effect;
Or, rather say, the cause of this defect;
For this effect, defective, comes by cause:
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend.
I have a daughter; have, while she is mine;
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: Now gather, and surmise.
—*To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia*[1],——
That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; *beautified* is a vile phrase; but you shall hear.—Thus:

[1] — To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most BEAUTIFIED Ophelia.] Mr. Theobald for *beautified* substituted *beatified*. MALONE.

Dr. Warburton has followed Mr. Theobald; but I am in doubt whether *beautified*, though as Polonius calls it, a *vile phrase*, be not the proper word. *Beautified* seems to be a *vile phrase*, for the ambiguity of its meaning.* JOHNSON.

Heywood, in his History of Edward VI. says, "Katherine Parre, queen dowager to king Henry VIII., was a woman *beautified* with many excellent virtues." FARMER.

So, in The Hog hath lost his Pearl, 1614:

"A maid of rich endowments, *beautified*
"With all the virtues nature could bestow."

Again, Nash dedicates his Christ's Tears over Jerusalem, 1594: "to the most *beautified* lady, the lady Elizabeth Carey."

Again, in Greene's Mamillia, 1593: "—— although thy person is so bravely *beautified* with the dowries of nature."

Ill and *vile* as the phrase may be, our author has used it again in The Two Gentlemen of Verona:

"—— seeing you are *beautified*
"With goodly shape," &c. STEEVENS.

By *beautified* Hamlet means *beautiful*. But Polonius, taking the word in the more strictly grammatical sense of *being made beautiful*, calls it a vile phrase, as implying that his daughter's beauty was the effect of art. M. MASON.

In her excellent white bosom, these [2], &c.—
Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?
Pol. Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.—

Doubt thou, the stars are fire; [Reads.
Doubt, that the sun doth move:
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt, I love.

O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have not art to reckon my groans: but that I love thee best, O most best [3], *believe it. Adieu.*
Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, Hamlet [4].

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown * me:
And more above [5], hath his solicitings,

* First folio, *shewed.*

[2] *In her excellent white bosom these,*] To, in The Two Gentlemen of Verona:

"Thy letters ——
"Which, being writ to me, shall be deliver'd
"Even in *the milk-white bosom of thy love.*"
ol. IV. p. 78. STEEVENS.

have followed the quarto. The folio reads:
"*These* in her excellent white bosom, these," &c.
In our poet's time the word *these* was usually added at the end of the superscription of letters, but I have never met with it both at the beginning and end. MALONE.

[3] —— *O most best,*] So, in Acolastus, a comedy, 1540:
"—— that same *most best* redresser or reformer, is God."
STEEVENS.

[4] —— *whilst this machine is to him, Hamlet.*] These words will not be ill explained by the conclusion of one of the Letters of the Paston Family, vol. ii. p. 43: "—— for your pleasure, *whyle my wytts be my owne.*"
The phrase employed by Hamlet seems to have a French construction. *Pendant que cette machine est a lui.* To be *one's own man* is a vulgar expression, but means much the same as Virgil's
Dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos regit artus.
STEEVENS.

[5] —— more above,] Is, *moreover, besides.* JOHNSON.

As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Receiv'd his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing,
(As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me,) what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;
Or given my heart a working, mute and dumb;
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think[6]? no, I went round[7] to work,
And my young mistress thus did I bespeak;

[6] If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;
Or given my heart a working, mute and dumb;
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think?] i. e. If either I had conveyed intelligence between them, and been the confident of their amours [play'd the desk or table-book,] or had connived at it, only observed them in secret, without acquainting my daughter with my discovery [giving my heart a mute and dumb working;] or lastly, been negligent in observing the intrigue, and overlooked it [looked upon this love with idle sight;] what would you have thought of me? Warburton.

I doubt whether the first line is rightly explained. It may mean, if I had locked up this secret in my own breast, as closely as it were confined in a desk or table-book. Malone.

Or given my heart a working, mute and dumb;] The folio reads—a *winking*. Steevens.

The same pleonasm [mute and dumb] is found in our author's Rape of Lucrece:

"And in my hearing be you *mute* and *dumb*." Malone.

[7] —— round —] i. e. roundly, without reserve. So Polonius says in the third Act: "—— be *round* with him." Steevens.

Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy sphere[8];
This must not be: and then I prescripts gave her[9],
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice[1];
And he, repulsed *, (a short tale to make,)
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast[2];
Thence to a watch; thence into a weakness;
Thence to a lightness; and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein † now he raves,

* Quarto, *repel'd*. † First folio, *whereon*.

[8] *Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy* SPHERE;] The quarto, 1604, and the first folio, for *sphere*, have *star*. The correction was made by the editor of the second folio. MALONE.

The old copies, I think, are right. *Out of thy star*, is *placed above thee by fortune*. We have *fortune's star* before. BOSWELL.

[9] —— PRECEPTS gave her,] Thus the folio. The two elder quartos read—*prescripts*. I have chosen the most familiar of the two readings. Polonius has already said to his son—

"And these few *precepts* in thy memory
"Look thou charácter." STEEVENS.

The original copy in my opinion is right. Polonius had *ordered* his daughter *to lock herself up from Hamlet's resort*, &c. See p. 225:

"I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
"Have you so slander any moment's leisure
"As to give words or talk with the lord Hamlet:
"Look to't, *I charge* you." MALONE.

[1] Which done, SHE TOOK the fruits of my advice;] She took the *fruits* of advice when she obeyed advice, the advice was then made *fruitful*. JOHNSON.

[2] —— (a short tale to make,)
Fell into a sadness; then into a fast; &c.] The ridicule of this character is here admirably sustained. He would not only be thought to have discovered this intrigue by his own sagacity, but to have remarked all the stages of Hamlet's disorder, from his sadness to his raving, as regularly as his physician could have done; when all the while the madness was only feigned. The humour of this is exquisite from a man who tells us, with a confidence peculiar to small politicians, that he could find—

"Where truth was hid, though it were hid indeed
"Within the centre." WARBURTON.

And all we mourn * for.

King. Do you think, 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very likely [3].

Pol. Hath there been such a time, (I'd fain know that,)
That I have positively said, *'Tis so,*
When it prov'd otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. Take this from this, if this be otherwise:
[*Pointing to his Head and Shoulder.*
If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours together [4],
Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him:

* First folio, *waile*.

[3] Very likely.] The quarto reading would suggest another arrangement of the verse:

" *King.* Do you think this?
" *Queen.* It may be very like."

An hemistich generally occurs at the end of a speech.

BOSWELL.

[4] —— FOUR hours together,] Perhaps it would be better were we to read indefinitely—

——*for* hours together. TYRWHITT.

I formerly was inclined to adopt Mr. Tyrwhitt's proposed emendation; but have now no doubt that the text is right. The expression, "*four* hours together," *two hours together*, &c. appears to have been common. So, in King Lear, Act I.:

" *Edm.* Spake you with him?
" *Edg.* Ay, *two hours together*."

Again, in The Winter's Tale:

" —— ay, and have been, any time these *four* hours."

Again, in Webster's Dutchess of Malfy, 1623:

" She will muse *four hours together*, and her silence
" Methinks expresseth more than if she spake."

MALONE.

Be you and I behind an arras then ;
Mark the encounter : if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But * keep a farm, and carters [5].
KING. We will try it.

* First folio, *And.*

[5] At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him :
Be you and I behind an arras then :
Mark the encounter : if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm, and carters.] The scheme of throwing Ophelia in Hamlet's way, in order to try his sanity, as well as the address of the King in a former scene to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern :

" —— I entreat you both
" That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
" Some little time ; so by your companies
" *To draw him on to pleasures*, and to gather
" So much as from occasion you may glean,
" Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus,
" That, open'd, lies within our remedy — ; "

seem to have been formed on the following slight hints in The Hystory of Hamblet, bl. let. sig C 3 : " They counselled to try and know if possible, how to discover the intent and meaning of the young prince ; and they could find no better nor more fit invention to intrap him, than to set some faire and beautiful woman in a secret place, that with flattering speeches and all the craftiest meanes she could, should purposely seek to allure his mind to have his pleasure of her.—To this end, *certain courtiers* were appointed to lead Hamlet to a solitary place, within the woods, where they brought the woman, inciting him to take their pleasures together. And surely the poore prince at this assault had beene in great danger, if a gentleman that in Horvendille's time had been nourished with him, had not showne himselfe more affectioned to the bringing up he had received with Hamblet, than desirous to please the tyrant.—This gentleman bare the courtiers company, making full account that the least showe of perfect sence and wisdome that Hamblet should make, would be sufficient to cause him to loose his life ; and therefore by certaine signes he gave Hamblet intelligence in what danger he was like to fall, if by any meanes he seemed to obeye, or once like the wanton toyes and vicious provocations of the gen-

Enter HAMLET, *reading.*

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

Pol. Away, I do beseech you, both away;
I'll board him[6] presently:—O, give me leave.—
[*Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.*
How does my good lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, god-'a-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well *; you are a fishmonger[7].

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten † thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead

* First folio, *Excellent, excellent.* † First folio, *two.*

tlewoman sent thither by his uncle: which much abashed the prince, as then wholly being in affection to the lady. But by her he was likewise informed of the treason, as one that from her infancy loved and favoured him.—The prince in this sort having deceived the courtiers and the lady's expectation, that affirmed and swore hee never once offered to have his pleasure of the woman, although in subtlety he affirmed the contrary, every man thereupon assured themselves that without doubt he was distraught of his sences;—so that as then Fengon's practise took no effect."

Here we find the rude outlines of the characters of Ophelia, and Horatio,—*the gentleman that in the time of Horvendille* (the father of Hamlet) *had been nourished with him.* But in this piece there are no traits of the character of Polonius. There is indeed a counsellor, and he places himself in the Queen's chamber behind the arras;—but this is the whole. MALONE.

6 I'll BOARD him—] i. e. accost, address him. See Twelfth Night, Act I. Sc. III. REED.

7 —you are a FISHMONGER.] Perhaps a joke was here intended. *Fishmonger* was a cant term for a *wencher*. So, in Barnaby Rich's Irish Hubbub: "Senex fornicator, an old *fishmonger*." MALONE.

dog, being a god, kissing carrion,——Have you a daughter [8]?

[8] For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a GOD, kissing carrion,——Have you a daughter?] Old copies—"a *good* kissing carrion,"] The editors seeing Hamlet counterfeit madness, thought they might safely put any nonsense into his mouth. But this strange passage, when set right, will be seen to contain as great and sublime a reflection as any the poet puts into his hero's mouth throughout the whole play. We will first give the true reading, which is this: "For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a *god*, kissing carrion——." As to the sense we may observe, that the illative particle [for] shows the speaker to be reasoning from something he had said before: what that was we learn in these words, "to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one picked out of ten thousand." Having said this, the chain of ideas led him to reflect upon the argument which libertines bring against Providence from the circumstance of abounding *evil*. In the next speech, therefore, he endeavours to answer that objection, and vindicate Providence, even on a supposition of the fact, that almost all men were wicked. His argument in the two lines in question is to this purpose,—'But why need we wonder at this abounding of evil? For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, which though a god, yet shedding its heat and influence upon carrion——' Here he stops short, lest talking too consequentially the hearer should suspect his madness to be feigned; and so turns him off from the subject, by enquiring of his daughter. But the inference which he intended to make, was a very noble one, and to this purpose. If this (says he) be the case, that the effect follows the thing operated upon [*carrion*] and not the thing operating [a *god*,] why need we wonder, that the supreme cause of all things diffusing its blessings on mankind, who is, as it were, a dead carrion, dead in original sin, man, instead of a proper return of duty, should breed only corruption and vices? This is the argument at length; and is as noble a one in behalf of Providence as could come from the schools of divinity. But this wonderful man had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors *say*, but with what they *think*. The sentiment too is altogether in character, for Hamlet is perpetually moralizing, and his circumstances make this reflection very natural. The same *thought*, something diversified, as on a different occasion, he uses again in Measure for Measure, which will serve to confirm these observations:

"The tempter or the tempted, who sins most?
"Not she; nor doth she tempt: but it is I
"That lying by the violet in the sun,

Pol. I have, my lord.
Ham. Let her not walk i'the sun: conception is

"Do as the carrion does, not as the flower,
"Corrupt by virtuous season."

And the same kind of *expression* is in Cymbeline:

"Common-kissing Titan." WARBURTON.

This is a noble emendation, which almost sets the critick on a level with the author. JOHNSON.

Dr. Warburton, in my apprehension, did not understand the passage. I have therefore omitted his laboured comment on it, in which he endeavours to prove that Shakspeare intended it as a vindication of the ways of Providence in permitting evil to abound in the world. He does not indeed pretend that this profound meaning can be drawn from what Hamlet *says;* but that this is what he was *thinking of;* for "this wonderful man (Shakspeare) had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors *say*, but with what they *think!*"

Hamlet's observation is, I think, simply this. He has just remarked that honesty is very rare in the world. To this Polonius assents. The prince then adds, that since there is so little virtue in the world, since corruption abounds every where, and maggots are *bred* by the sun, even in a dead dog, Polonius ought to take care to prevent his daughter from walking in the sun, lest she should prove "a *breeder* of sinners;" for though *conception* in general be a blessing, yet as Ophelia (whom Hamlet supposes to be as frail as the rest of the world,) might chance to *conceive*, it might be a calamity. The maggots *breeding* in a dead dog, seem to have been mentioned merely to introduce the word *conception;* on which word, as Mr. Steevens has observed, Shakspeare has played in King Lear: and probably a similar quibble was intended here. The word, however, may have been used in its ordinary sense, for *pregnancy*, without any double meaning.

The slight connexion between this and the preceding passage, and Hamlet's abrupt question,—"Have you a daughter?" were manifestly intended more strongly to impress Polonius with the belief of the prince's madness.

Perhaps this passage ought rather to be regulated thus:—"being a *god-kissing carrion;*" i. e. a carrion that kisses the sun. The participle *being* naturally refers to the last antecedent, *dog*. Had Shakspeare intended that it should be referred to *sun*, he would probably have written—'*he* being a god,' &c. We have many similar compound epithets in these plays. Thus, in King Lear, Act II. Sc. I. Kent speaks of "*ear-kissing* arguments." Again, more appositely, in the play before us:

"New lighted on a *heaven-kissing* hill."

a blessing[9]; but as your daughter may conceive,—friend, look to't.

Pol. [*Aside.*] How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter:—yet he knew me not at first; he said, I was a fishmonger: He is far gone, far gone: and, truly in my youth I suffered much ex-

Again, in The Rape of Lucrece:

"Threatning *cloud-kissing* Ilion with annoy."

However, the instance quoted from Cymbeline by Dr. Warburton, "—— *common-kissing* Titan," seems in favour of the regulation that has been hitherto made; for here we find the poet considered the sun as kissing the carrion, not the carrion as kissing the sun. So, also, in King Henry IV. P. I.: "Didst thou never see Titan kiss a dish of butter?" The following lines also in the historical play of King Edward III. 1596, which Shakspeare had certainly seen, are, it must be acknowledged, adverse to the regulation I have suggested:

"The freshest *summer's day* doth soonest *taint*
"The loathed *carrion*, that it seems to *kiss*."

In justice to Dr. Johnson, I should add, that the high eulogy which he has pronounced on Dr. Warburton's emendation, was founded on the *comment* which accompanied it; of which, however, I think, his judgment must have condemned the reasoning, though his goodness and piety approved its moral tendency.

MALONE.

As a doubt, at least, may be entertained on this subject, I have not ventured to expunge a note written by a great critick, and applauded by a greater. STEEVENS.

9 — CONCEPTION is a blessing, &c.] Thus the quarto. The folio reads thus: "— *conception* is a blessing; but *not* as your daughter may *conceive*. Friend, look to't." The meaning seems to be, *conception* (i. e. understanding) is a blessing; but as your daughter may *conceive* (i. e. be pregnant,) *friend look to't*, i. e. have a care of that. The same quibble occurs again in the first scene of King Lear:

"*Kent*. I cannot *conceive* you, sir.
"*Glo*. Sir, this young fellow's mother *could*." STEEVENS.

The word *not*, I have no doubt, was inserted by the editor of the folio, in consequence of his not understanding the passage. A little lower we find a similar interpolation in some of the copies, probably from the same cause: "You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will *not* more willingly part withal, except my life." MALONE.

tremity for love; very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words!

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue * says here, that old men have grey beards [1]; that their

* First folio, *slave*.

[1] Slanders, sir: for the SATIRICAL ROGUE says here, that old men, &c.] By the *satirical rogue* he means Juvenal in his 10th Satire:

" Da spatium vitæ, multos da, Jupiter, annos:
" Hoc recto vultu, solum hoc et pallidus optas.
" Sed quàm continuis et quantis longa senectus
" Plena malis! *deformem, et tetrum ante omnia vultum,*
" *Dissimilemque sui,*" &c.

Nothing could be finer imagined for Hamlet, in his circumstances, than the bringing him in reading a description of the evils of long life. WARBURTON.

Had Shakspeare read Juvenal in the original, he had met with—

" De temone Britanno, Excidet *Arviragus*——."

and—

" —— Uxorem, *Posthume*, ducis?"

We should not then have had continually in Cymbeline, *Arvirāgus*, and *Posthūmus*. Should it be said that the *quantity* in the *former* word might be forgotten, it is clear from a mistake in the *latter*, that Shakspeare could not possibly have read any one of the Roman poets.

There was a translation of the 10th Satire of Juvenal by Sir John Beaumont, the elder brother of the famous Francis: but I cannot tell whether it was printed in Shakspeare's time. In that age of quotation, every classick might be picked up by *piecemeal*.

I forgot to mention in its proper place, that another description of *Old Age* in As You Like It, has been called a parody on a passage in a French poem of Garnier. It is trifling to say any thing about this, after the observation I made in Macbeth: but one may remark once for all, that Shakspeare wrote for the *people*; and could not have been so absurd as to bring forward any allusion, which had not been familiarized by some accident or other.

FARMER.

faces are wrinkled; their eyes purging thick amber, and plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: All of which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir, should be old as I am [2], if, like a crab, you could go backward.

POL. Though this be madness, yet there is method in't. [*Aside.*] Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

HAM. Into my grave?

POL. Indeed, that is out o'the air.—How pregnant sometimes his replies are [3]! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly [4] contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

HAM. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life.

POL. Fare you well, my lord.

HAM. These tedious old fools!

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2 —SHOULD BE [as] old as I am,] Thus the first folio. The quarto reads—"*shall grow* [as] old as I am." The modern editors have changed it to—"*shall be* as old as I am." BOSWELL.

3 How PREGNANT, &c.] *Pregnant* is *ready, dexterous, apt.* So, in Twelfth Night:

"———— a wickedness

"Wherein the *pregnant* enemy doth much." STEEVENS.

4 —and suddenly, &c.] This and the greatest part of the two following lines, are omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

"They read: "I will leave him and my daughter. My lord, I will take my leave of you." BOSWELL.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ[5] *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Pol. You go to seek the lord Hamlet; there he is.

Ros. God save you, sir! [*To* POLONIUS.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.

Guil. My honour'd lord!—

Ros. My most dear lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not overhappy; On fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

Guil. 'Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true; she is a strumpet. What news?

Ros. None, my lord; but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is dooms-day near: But your news is not true. [Let me[6] question more in particular: What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord!

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Ros. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are many

[5] —Rosencrantz —] There was an ambassador of that name in England about the time when this play was written. STEEVENS.

[6] [Let me, &c.] All within the crotchets is wanting in the quartos. STEEVENS.

confines, wards, and dungeons; Denmark being one of the worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

Ros. Why, then your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God! I could be bounded in a nut-shell, and count myself a king of infinite space; were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream [7].

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars, bodies [8]; and our monarchs, and outstretch'd heroes, the beggars' shadows: Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Ros. Guil. We'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended.] But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

7 — the shadow of a dream.] Shakspeare has accidentally inverted the expression of Pindar, that the state of humanity is σκιας ὄναρ, the *dream of a shadow.* JOHNSON.

So, Davies:

"Man's life is but a dreame, nay, less than so,
"*A shadow of a dreame.*" FARMER.

So, in the tragedy of Darius, 1603, by Lord Sterline:

"Whose best was but the *shadow of a dream.*"
STEEVENS.

8 Then are our beggars, bodies;] Shakspeare seems here to design a ridicule of those declamations against wealth and greatness, that seem to make happiness consist in poverty. JOHNSON.

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear, a halfpenny[9]. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, come; deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Any thing—but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know, the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

Ros. What say you? [*To* Guildenstern.

Ham. Nay, then I have an eye of you[1]; [*Aside.*

—if you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late[2],

9 —too dear, A halfpenny.] i. e. a halfpenny too dear; they are worth nothing. The modern editors read—*at* a halfpenny. Malone.

1 Nay, then I have an eye of you;] An *eye of you* means, 'I have a glimpse of your meaning.' Steevens.

To have an eye upon any one, that is, *to be aware of what he is about*, is still a common phrase. Boswell.

2 I have of late, &c.] This is an admirable description of a rooted melancholy sprung from thickness of blood; and artfully imagined to hide the true cause of his disorder from the penetration of these two friends, who were set over him as spies. Warburton.

(but, wherefore, I know not,) lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises: and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a steril promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament [3], this majestical roof fretted with golden fire [4], why, it appears no other thing * to me, than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty †! in form, and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me, no, nor woman neither; though, by your smiling, you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said, Man delights not me?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment [5] the players shall

* Quarto, *nothing*. † Quarto, *faculties*.

3 —this brave o'erhanging FIRMAMENT.] Thus the quarto. The folio reads—" this brave *o'er*-hanging, *this*," &c. STEEVENS.

4 —this most excellent canopy, the AIR,—this majestical roof fretted with GOLDEN FIRE,] So, in our author's 21st Sonnet:

" As those *gold candles*, fix'd in heaven's *air*."

Again, in The Merchant of Venice:

" —— Look, how the floor of *heaven*
" Is thick inlaid with patins of bright *gold!*" MALONE.

5 —LENTEN entertainment—] i. e. sparing, like the entertainments given in *Lent*. So, in The Duke's Mistress, by Shirley, 1638:

" —— to maintain you with bisket,
" Poor John, and half a livery, to read moral virtue
" And *lenten* lectures." STEEVENS.

receive from you: we coted them on the way [6]; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

Ham. He that plays the king, shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me: the adventurous knight shall use his foil, and target: the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace [7]: [the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o'the sere [8];] and the

[6] —we COTED them on the way;] To *cote* is *to overtake*. I meet with this word in The Return from Parnassus, a comedy, 1606:

" —— marry we presently *coted* and outstript them."

Again, in Golding's Ovid's Metamorphosis, 1587, book ii.:

" With that Hippomenes *coted* her."

Again, in Warner's Albion's England, 1602, b. vi. chap. xxx.:

" Gods and goddesses for wantonness out-*coted*."

Again, in Drant's translation of Horace's satires, 1567:

" For he that thinks to *coat* all men, and all to overgoe."

Chapman has more than once used the word in his version of the 23d Iliad.

In the laws of coursing, says Mr. Tollet, " a *cote* is when a greyhound goes endways by the side of his fellow, and gives the hare a turn." This quotation seems to point out the etymology of the verb to be from the French *coté*, the side. STEEVENS.

[7] —shall end his part in peace:] After these words the folio adds—" the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o' the sere. WARBURTON.

[8] —[the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o'the sere;] i. e. those who are asthmatical, and to whom laughter is most uneasy. This is the case (as I am told) with those whose lungs are tickled by the *sere* or *serum:* but about these words I am neither very confident, nor very solicitous. Will the following passage in The Tempest be of use to any future commentator?

" —— to minister occasion to these gentlemen, who are of such sensible and nimble *lungs*, that they always use to laugh at nothing."

The word *seare* occurs as unintelligibly in an ancient Dialogue between the Comen Secretary and Jelowsy, touchynge the Unstableness of Harlottes, bl. l. no date:

" And wyll byde whysperynge in the eare,
" Thynk ye her tayle is not light *of the seare?*"

The sense of the adjective *sere* is not more distinct in Chapman's version of the 22d Iliad:

" Hector, thou only pestilence, in all mortalitie,
" To my *sere* spirits."

lady shall say her mind freely [9], or the blank verse shall halt for't.—What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it, they travel [1]? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Ros. I think, their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation [2].

A *sere* is likewise the *talon* of a hawk. See p. 292, n. 1. STEEVENS.

These words are not in the quarto. MALONE.

The same expression occurs in Howard's Defensative against the Poyson of supposed Prophecies, 1620, folio: "Discovering the moods and humors of the vulgar sort to be so loose and *tickle of the seare*," &c. folio 31. Every one has felt that dry tickling in the throat and lungs which excites coughing. Hamlet's meaning may therefore be, *the clown by his merriment shall convert even their coughing into laughter*. DOUCE.

9 — the lady shall say her mind, &c.] The lady shall have no obstruction, unless from the lameness of the verse. JOHNSON.

I think, the meaning is,—The lady shall mar the measure of the verse, rather than not express herself freely or fully. HENDERSON.

1 How chances it, they TRAVEL?] To *travel* in Shakspeare's time was the technical word, for which we have substituted to *stroll*. So, in the Office-book of Sir Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels to King Charles the First, a manuscript of which an account is given in vol. iii.: "1622. Feb. 17, for a certificate for the Palsgrave's servants to *travel* into the country for six week, 10s." Again, in Ben Jonson's Poetaster, 1601: "If he pen for thee once, thou shalt not need to *travell*, with thy pumps full of gravell, any more, after a blinde jade and a hamper, and stalk upon boords and barrel-heads to an old crackt trumpet." These words are addressed to a player. MALONE.

2 I think, their INHIBITION, &c.] I fancy this is transposed: Hamlet inquires not about an *inhibition*, but an *innovation*: the answer therefore probably was,—'I think, their innovation,' that is, *their new practice of strolling*, 'comes by means of the late inhibition.' JOHNSON.

The drift of Hamlet's question appears to be this,—How chances it they travel?—i. e. How happens it that they are become strollers?—Their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways —i. e. to have remained in a settled theatre, was

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

the more honourable as well as the more lucrative situation. To this, Rosencrantz replies,—Their *inhibition* comes by means of the late *innovation*.—i. e. 'their permission to act any longer at an established house is taken away, in consequence of the new custom of introducing personal abuse into their comedies.' Several companies of actors in the time of our author were silenced on account of this licentious practice. Among these (as appears from a passage in Have With You to Saffron Walden, or Gabriel Harvey's Hunt is Up, &c. 1596,) even the children of St. Paul's: "Troth, would he might for mee (that's all the harme I wish him) for then we neede never wishe the playes at Powles up againe," &c. See a dialogue between Comedy and Envy at the conclusion of Mucedorus, 1598, as well as the preludium to Aristippus, or the Jovial Philosopher, 1630, from whence the following passage is taken: "*Shews* having been long intermitted and forbidden by authority, *for their abuses*, could not be raised but by conjuring." *Shew* enters, whipped by two furies, and the prologue says to her—

"—— with tears wash off that guilty sin,
"Purge out those ill-digested dregs of wit,
"That use their ink to blot a spotless name:
"Let's have no one *particular man* traduc'd,—
"—— spare the *persons*," &c.

Alteration, therefore, in the order of the words, seems to be quite unnecessary. STEEVENS.

There will still, however, remain some difficulty. The statute 39 Eliz. ch. 4, which seems to be alluded to by the words—*their inhibition*, was not made to inhibit the players from acting any longer at an *established theatre*, but to prohibit them from *strolling*. "All fencers, (says the act,) bearwards, *common players of enterludes*, and minstrels, *wandering abroad*, (other than players of enterludes, belonging to any baron of this realm or any other honourable personage of greater degree, to be authorized to play under the hand and seal of arms of such baron or personage,) shall be taken, adjudged, and deemed rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars, and shall sustain such pain and punishments as by this act is in that behalf appointed."

This statute, if alluded to, is repugnant to Dr. Johnson's transposition of the text, and to Mr. Steevens's explanation of it as it now stands. Yet Mr. Steevens's explanation may be right: Shakspeare might not have thought of the act of Elizabeth. He could not, however, mean to charge his friends the *old tragedians* with the *new custom* of introducing personal abuse; but must rather have meant, that the old tragedians were inhibited from per-

Ros. No, indeed, they are not.

[*Ham.* How comes it [3]? Do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: But there is, sir, an eyry of children [9], little

forming in the city, and obliged to travel, on account of the misconduct of the younger company. See note 9. MALONE.

By the late *innovation*, it is probable that Rosencrantz means, the late change of government. The word *innovation* is used in the same sense in The Triumph of Love, in Fletcher's Four Moral Representations in One, where Cornelia says to Rinaldo:

" ——— and in poor habits clad,
" (You fled, and the *innovation* laid aside)."

And in Fletcher's [Shirley's] play of The Coronation, after Leonatus is proclaimed king, Lysander says to Philocles:

" What dost thou think of this *innovation?*" M. MASON.

[3] [*Ham.* How comes it? &c.] The lines enclosed in crotchets are in the folio of 1623, but not in any of the quartos. JOHNSON.

[9] —— an eyry of children, &c.] Relating to the play houses then contending, the Bankside, the Fortune, &c. played by the children of his majesty's chapel. POPE.

It relates to the young singing men of the chapel royal, or St. Paul's, of the former of whom perhaps the earliest mention occurs in an anonymous puritanical pamphlet, 1569, entitled The Children of the Chapel Stript and Whipt: " Plaies will neuer be suppresst, while her maiesties unfledged minions flaunt it in silkes and sattens. They had as well be at their popish seruice in the deuils garments," &c.—Again, ibid: " Euen in her maiesties chapel do these pretty upstart youthes profane the Lordes day by the lasciuious writhing of their tender limbes, and gorgeous decking of their apparell, in feigning bawdie fables gathered from the idolatrous heathen poets," &c.

Concerning the performances and success of the latter in attracting the best company, I also find the following passage in Jack Drum's Entertainment, or Pasquil and Katherine, 1601:

" I saw the *children of Powles* last night;
" And troth they pleased me pretty, pretty well,
" The apes, in time, will do it handsomely,
" —— I like the audience that frequenteth there
" With *much applause:* a man shall not be choak'd
" With the stench of garlick, nor be pasted
" To the barmy jacket of a beer-brewer.
" ——'Tis a good *gentle audience*," &c.

It is said in Richard Flecknoe's Short Discourse of the English Stage, 1664, that " both the children of the chappel and St.

eyases,* that cry out on the top of question [1], and are most tyrannically clapped for't: these are now the Paul's, acted playes, the one in White-Friers, the other behinde the Convocation-house in Paul's; till people growing more precise, and playes more licentious, the theatre of Paul's was quite suppress, and that of the children of the chappel converted to the use of the children of the revels." STEEVENS.

The suppression to which Flecknoe alludes took place in the year 1583-4; but afterwards both the children of the chapel and of the Revels played at our author's playhouse in Blackfriars, and elsewhere: and the choir-boys of St. Paul's at their own house. See the Account of our old Theatres, in my History of the Stage. A certain number of the children of the Revels, I believe, belonged to each of the principal theatres.

Our author cannot be supposed to direct any satire at those young men who played occasionally at his own theatre. Ben Jonson's Cynthia's Revels, and his Poetaster, were performed there by the children of Queen Elizabeth's chapel, in 1600 and 1601; and Eastward Hoe by the children of the revels, in 1604 or 1605. I have no doubt, therefore, that the dialogue before us was pointed at the choir-boys of St. Paul's, who in 1601 acted two of Marston's plays, Antonio and Mellida, and Antonio's Revenge. Many of Lyly's plays were represented by them about the same time; and in 1607, Chapman's Bussy d'Ambois was performed by them with great applause. It was probably in this and some other noisy tragedies of the same kind, that they *cry'd out on the top of question, and were most tyrannically clapped for't.*

At a later period indeed, after our poet's death, the Children of the Revels had an established theatre of their own, and some dispute seems to have arisen between them and the king's company. They performed regularly in 1623, and for eight years afterwards, at the Red Bull in St. John's Street; and in 1627, Shakspeare's company obtained an inhibition from the Master of the Revels to prevent their performing any of his plays at their house: as appears from the following entry in Sir Henry Herbert's Office-book, already mentioned: "From Mr. Heminge, in their company's name, to forbid the playinge of any of Shakspeare's playes to the Red Bull company, this 11th of Aprill, 1627,—5 0 0." From other passages in the same book, it appears that the Children of the Revels composed the Red-Bull company.

The licentiousness of the stage is noticed in a letter from Mr. Samuel Calvert to Mr. Winwood, dated March 28, 1605, which might lead us to suppose that the words found only in the folio were added at that time:

"The plays do not forbear to present upon the stage the whole

fashion; and so berattle the common stages, (so they call them) that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

course of this present time, not sparing the king, state, or religion, in so great absurdity, and with such liberty, that any would be afraid to hear them." *Memorials*, vol. ii. p. 54.

We learn from Heywood's Apology for Actors, that the little *eyases* here mentioned were the persons who were guilty of the *late innovation*, or practice of introducing personal abuse on the stage, and perhaps for their particular fault the players in general suffered; and the older and more decent comedians, as well as the children, had on some recent occasion been *inhibited* from acting in London, and compelled to turn strollers. This supposition will make the words, concerning which a difficulty has been stated, (see n. 7,) perfectly clear. Heywood's Apology for Actors was published in 1612; the passage therefore which is found in the folio, and not in the quarto, may have been added either in 1605 or 1612.

"Now to speake (says Heywood,) of some abuse *lately* crept into the quality, as *an inveighing against the state, the court, the law, the citty, and their governments, with the particularizing of private mens humours, yet alive, noblemen and others,* I know it distastes many; neither do I any way approve it, nor dare I by any means excuse it. The liberty which some arrogate to themselves, committing their bitterness and liberal invectives against all estates *to the mouthes of children*, supposing their juniority to be a privilege for any rayling, be it never so violent, I could advise all such to curbe, and limit this presumed liberty within the bands of discretion and government. But wise and judicial censurers before whom such complaints shall at any time hereafter come, will not, I hope, impute these abuses to any transgression in *us*, who have ever been carefull and provident to shun the like."

Prynne in his Histriomastix, speaking of the state of the stage, about the year 1620, has this passage: "Not to particularise those late new scandalous invective playes, wherein sundry persons of place and eminence [Gundemore, the late lord admiral, lord treasurer, and others,] have been particularly personated, jeared, abused in a gross and scurrilous manner," &c.

The folio 1623 has—*berattled*. The correction was made by the editor of the second folio. MALONE.

[1] — little EYASES, that cry out on the top of question,] Little *eyases*; i. e. young nestlings, creatures just out of the egg. THEOBALD.

The Booke of Haukying, &c. bl. l. no date, seems to offer an-

Ham. What, are they children? who maintains them? how are they escoted[2]? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing[3]? will they

other etymology; "And so bycause the best knowledge is by the *eye*, they be called *eyessed*. Ye may also know an *eyesse* by the paleness of the seres of her legges, or the sere over the beake."

STEEVENS.

From *ey*, Teut. ovum, q. d. qui recens ex ovo emersit. Skinner, Etymol. An *aiery* or *eyry*, as it ought rather to be written, is derived from the same root, and signifies both a young brood of hawks, and the nest itself in which they are produced.

An *eyas* hawk is sometimes written a *nyas* hawk, perhaps from a corruption that has happened in many words in our language, from the latter *n* passing from the end of one word to the beginning of another. However, some etymologists think *nyas* a legitimate word. MALONE.

"— cry out on the top of *question*." The meaning seems to be, they ask a common question in the highest note of the voice.

JOHNSON.

I believe *question*, in this place, as in many others, signifies *conversation, dialogue*. So, in The Merchant of Venice: "*Think*, you *question* with a Jew." The meaning of the passage may therefore be—'Children that perpetually recite in the highest notes of voice that can be uttered.' STEEVENS.

When we ask a *question*, we generally end the sentence with a high note. I believe, therefore, that what Rosencrantz means to say is, that these children declaim, through the whole of their parts, in the high note commonly used *at the end of a question*, and are applauded for it. M. MASON.

[2] — escoted?] Paid. From the French *escot*, a *shot* or *reckoning*. JOHNSON.

[3] Will they pursue the QUALITY no longer than they can sing?] Will they follow the *profession* of players no longer than they keep the voices of boys, and sing in the choir? So afterwards, he says to the player, "Come, give us a taste of your *quality*; come, a passionate speech." JOHNSON.

So, in the players' Dedication, prefixed to the first edition of Fletcher's plays in folio, 1647: "— directed by the example of some who once steered in our *quality*, and so fortunately aspired to chuse your honour, joined with your now glorified brother, patrons to the flowing compositions of the then expired sweet swan of Avon, Shakspeare." Again, in Gosson's School of Abuse, 1579: "I speak not of this, as though every one [of the players] that professeth the *qualitie*, so abused himself—."

"Than they can *sing*," does not merely mean, 'than they keep

not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it is most like [4], if their means are no better,) their writers do them wrong [5], to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre them on to controversy [6]: there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is it possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too [7].]

Ham. It is not very * strange: for my uncle [8] is

* First folio omits *very*.

the voices of boys,' but is to be understood literally. He is speaking of the choir-boys of St. Paul's. MALONE.

4 — most like,] The old copy reads—"like most." STEEVENS. The correction was made by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

5 — their writers do them wrong, &c.] I should have been very much surprised if I had *not* found Ben Jonson among the writers here alluded to. STEEVENS.

6 — to TARRE them on to controversy:] To provoke any animal to rage, is *to tarre him*. The word is said to come from the Greek ταράσσω. JOHNSON.

So, already, in King John:

"Like a dog, that is compelled to fight,
"Snatch at his master that doth *tarre* him on."

STEEVENS.

7 — HERCULES and his load too.] i. e. they not only carry away the world, but the world-bearer too: alluding to the story of Hercules's relieving Atlas. This is humorous. WARBURTON.

The allusion may be to the *Globe* playhouse on the Bankside, the sign of which was *Hercules carrying the Globe*. STEEVENS.

I suppose Shakspeare meant, that the boys drew greater audiences than the elder players of the Globe theatre. MALONE.

8 It is not very strange: for my uncle —] I do not wonder that the new players have so suddenly risen to reputation, my uncle supplies another example of the facility with which honour is conferred upon new claimants. JOHNSON.

king of Denmark; and those, that would make mouths * at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little [9]. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of Trumpets within.*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands. Come then: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: let me comply with you in this † garb [1]; lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must show fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome: but my uncle-father, and aunt-mother, are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly [2], I know a hawk from a handsaw [3].

* First folio, *mowes*. † First folio, *the*.

"It is not very strange," &c. was originally Hamlet's observation, on being informed that the old tragedians of the city were not so followed as they used to be: [see p. 290:] but Dr. Johnson's explanation is certainly just, and this passage connects sufficiently well with that which now immediately precedes it.

MALONE.

9 — in little.] i. e. in miniature. So, in The Noble Soldier, 1634:

"The perfection of all Spaniards, Mars *in little*."

Again, in Drayton's Shepherd's Sirena:

"Paradise *in little* done."

Again, in Massinger's New Way to Pay Old Debts:

"His father's picture *in little*." STEEVENS.

1 — let me COMPLY, &c.] Sir T. Hanmer reads—"let me *compliment* with you." JOHNSON.

To *comply* is again apparently used in the sense of—to *compliment*, in Act V.: "He did *comply* with his dug, before he sucked it." STEEVENS.

2 — when the wind is SOUTHERLY, &c.] So, in Damon and Pythias, 1582:

"But I perceive now, either the *winde is at the south*,
"Or else your tunge cleaveth to the roofe of your mouth."

STEEVENS.

Enter POLONIUS.

POL. Well be with you, gentlemen!

HAM. Hark you, Guildenstern;—and you too;—at each ear a hearer: that great baby, you see there, is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

ROS. Happily, he's the second time come to them; for, they say, an old man is twice a child.

HAM. I will prophecy, he comes to tell me of the players; mark it.—You say right, sir: o'Monday morning; 'twas then, indeed.

POL. My lord, I have news to tell you.

HAM. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome,——

POL. The actors are come hither, my lord.

HAM. Buz, buz[4]!

[3] — I know a hawk from a handsaw.] This was a common proverbial speech. The Oxford editor alters it to,—"I know a hawk from an *hernshaw*," as if the other had been a corruption of the players; whereas the poet found the proverb thus corrupted in the mouth of the people: so that the critick's alteration only serves to show us the original of the expression. WARBURTON.

Similarity of sound is the source of many literary corruptions. In Holborn we have still the sign of the *Bull and Gate*, which exhibits but an odd combination of images. It was originally (as I learn from the title-page of an old play) the *Boulogne Gate*, i. e. one of the gates of *Boulogne*; designed perhaps as a compliment to Henry VIII. who took the place in 1544.

The *Boulogne Mouth*, now the *Bull and Mouth*, had probably the same origin, i. e. the *mouth of the harbour of Boulogne*. STEEVENS.

The *Boulogne Gate* was not one of the gates of *Boulogne*, but of *Calais*: and is frequently mentioned as such by Hall and Holinshed. RITSON.

[4] Buz, buz!] Mere idle talk, the *buz* of the vulgar. JOHNSON.

"Buz, buz!" are, I believe, only interjections employed to interrupt Polonius. Ben Jonson uses them often for the same purpose, as well as Middleton in A Mad World, my Masters, 1608. STEEVENS.

Buz used to be an interjection at Oxford, when any one began a story that was generally known before. BLACKSTONE.

Pol. Upon my honour,——

Ham. Then came each actor on his ass [5],——

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, [tragical-historical [6], tragical-comical-historical-pastoral,] scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light [7]. For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men [8].

Buzzer, in a subsequent scene in this play, is used for a *busy talker*:

"And wants not *buzzers*, to infect his ear
"With pestilent speeches."

Again, in King Lear:

"—— on every dream,
"Each *buz*, each fancy."

Again, in Trussel's History of England, 1635: "—— who, instead of giving redress, suspecting now the truth of the duke of Gloucester's *buzz*," &c.

It is, therefore, probable from the answer of Polonius, that *buz* was used, as Dr. Johnson supposes, for an idle rumour without any foundation.

In Ben Jonson's Staple of News, the collector of mercantile intelligence is called Emissary *Buz*. Malone.

Whatever may be the origin of this phrase, or rather of this interjection, it is not unusual, even at this day, to cry *buz* to any person who begins to relate what the company had heard before. M. Mason.

5 — Then came, &c.] This seems to be a line of a ballad. Johnson.

6 — tragical-historical, &c.] The words within the crotchets I have recovered from the folio, and see no reason why they were hitherto omitted. There are many plays of the age, if not of Shakspeare, that answer to these descriptions. Steevens.

7 — Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light.] The tragedies of Seneca were translated into English by Thomas Newton, and others, and published first separate, at different times, and afterwards all together in 1581. One comedy of Plautus, viz. the Menæchmi, was likewise translated and published in 1595. Steevens.

I believe the frequency of plays performed at publick schools, suggested to Shakspeare the names of Seneca and Plautus as dramatick authors. T. Warton.

Prefixed to a map of Cambridge in the Second Part of Braunii

HAM. O Jephthah, judge of Israel,—what a treasure hadst thou!

POL. What a treasure had he, my lord?

HAM. Why—*One fair daughter, and no more,*
The which he loved passing well.

POL. Still on my daughter. [*Aside.*

HAM. Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

POL. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter, that I love passing well.

Civitates, &c. is an account of the University, by Gulielmus Soonus, 1575. "In this curious memoir we have the following passage: 'Januarium, Februarium, et Martium menses, ut noctis tædix fallant in spectaculis populo exhibendis ponunt tanta elegantia, tanta actionis dignitate, ea vocis et vultus moderatione, ea magnificentia, ut si *Plautus*, aut Terentius, aut *Seneca* revivisceret mirarentur suas ipsi fabulas, majoremque quam cum inspectante popul. Rom. agerentur, voluptatem credo caperent. Euripidem vero, Sophoclem et Aristophanem, etiam Athenarum suarum tæderet." STEEVENS.

[8] For the law of WRIT, and the liberty, these are the only men.] All the modern editors have,—"the law of *wit*, and the liberty;" but both my old copies have—"the law of *writ*," I believe rightly. *Writ*, for *writing*, *composition*. *Wit* was not, in our author's time, taken either for *imagination*, or *acuteness*, or *both together*, but for *understanding*, for the faculty by which we *apprehend* and *judge*. Those who wrote of the human mind, distinguished its primary powers into *wit* and *will*. Ascham distinguishes *boys* of tardy and of active faculties into *quick wits* and *slow wits*. JOHNSON.

That *writ* is here used for *writing*, may be proved by the following passage in Titus Andronicus:

"Then all too late I bring this fatal *writ*." STEEVENS.

The old copies are certainly right. *Writ* is used for *writing* by authors contemporary with Shakspeare. Thus, in The Apologie of Pierce Pennilesse, by Thomas Nashe, 1593: "For the lowsie circumstance of his poverty before his death, and sending that miserable *writte* to his wife, it cannot be but thou liest, learned Gabriel." Again, in Bishop Earle's Character of a mere dull Physician, 1638: "Then followes a *writ* to his drugger, in a strange tongue, which he understands, though he cannot conster."

Again, in King Henry VI. P. II.:

"Now, good my lord, let's see the devil's *writ*." MALONE.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows then, my lord?

Ham. Why, *As by lot, God wot* [9], and then, you know, *It came to pass, As most like it was*,—The first row of the pious chanson [1] will show you more; for look, my abridgment [2] comes *.

* First folio, *abridgments come.*

9 Why, *As by lot, God wot*, &c.] The old song from which these quotations are taken, I communicated to Dr. Percy, who has honoured it with a place in the second and third editions of his Reliques of Ancient English Poetry. In the books belonging to the Stationers' Company, there are two entries of this ballad among others. "A ballet intituled the Songe of Jepthah's Doughter," &c. 1567, vol. i. fol. 162. Again: "Jeffa Judge of Israel," p. 93, vol. iii. Dec. 14, 1624.

This story was also one of the favourite subjects of ancient tapestry." STEEVENS.

There is a Latin tragedy on the subject of Jephtha, by John Christopherson, in 1546, and another by Buchanan, in 1554. A third by Du Plessis Mornay, is mentioned by Prynne, in his Histriomastix. The same subject had probably been introduced on the English stage. MALONE.

1 — the PIOUS CHANSON —] It is *pons chansons* in the first folio edition. The old ballads sung on bridges, and from thence called *pons chansons*. Hamlet is here repeating ends of old songs. POPE.

It is *pons chansons* in the quarto too. I know not whence the *rubrick* has been brought, yet it has not the appearance of an arbitrary addition. The titles of old ballads were never printed red; but perhaps *rubrick* may stand for *marginal explanation*. JOHNSON.

There are five large volumes of ballads in Mr. Pepys's collection in Magdalen's College Library, Cambridge, some as ancient as Henry VII.'s reign, and not one red letter upon any one of the titles. GREY.

The words, *of the rubrick*, were first inserted by Mr. Rowe, in his edition in 1709. The old quartos in 1604, 1605, and 1611, read, *pious chanson*, which gives the sense wanted, and I have accordingly inserted it in the text.

The *pious chansons* were a kind of *Christmas carols*, containing some scriptural history thrown into loose rhymes, and sung about the streets by the common people when they went at that season to solicit alms. Hamlet is here repeating some scraps from a song of this kind, and when Polonius enquires what follows

Enter Four or Five Players.

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all:—I am glad to see thee well:—welcome, good friends.—O, old friend! Why, thy face is valanced [3] since I saw thee last; Com'st thou to beard me [4] in Denmark?—What! my young lady and mistress! By-'r-lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven, than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine [5]. Pray

them, he refers him to the *first row* (i. e. division) of one of these, to obtain the information he wanted. STEEVENS.

[2] —my abridgment—] He calls the players afterwards, *the brief chronicles of the times;* but I think he now means only *those who will shorten my talk.* JOHNSON.

An *abridgment* is used for a dramatick piece in A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Act V. Sc. I.:

"Say what *abridgment* have you for this evening?"

but it does not commodiously apply to this passage. See vol. v. p. 311. STEEVENS.

[3] —thy face is VALANCED—] i. e. fringed with a beard. The valance is the fringes or drapery hanging round the tester of a bed. MALONE.

Dryden, in one of his epilogues, has the following line:

"Criticks in plume, and white *valancy* wig." STEEVENS.

[4] —to BEARD me—] To *beard*, anciently signified to *set at defiance*. So, in King Henry IV. P. I.:

"No man so potent breathes upon the ground,
"But I will *beard* him." STEEVENS.

[5] —by the altitude of a CHOPINE.] A *chioppine* is a high shoe, or rather, a clog, worn by the Italians, as in T. Heywood's Challenge of Beauty, Act V. Song:

"The Italian in her high *chopeene*,
"Scotch lass, and lovely froe too;
"The Spanish Donna, French Madame,
"He doth not feare to go to."

So, in Ben Jonson's Cynthia's Revels:

"I do wish myself one of my mistress's *cioppini*." Another demands, why would he be one of his mistress's *cioppini?* a third answers, "because he would make her *higher*."

Again, in Decker's Match Me in London, 1631: "I'm only taking instructions to make her a lower *chopeene;* she finds fault that she's lifted too high."

Again, in Chapman's Cæsar and Pompey, 1613:

"——————and thou shalt

God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring[6].—Masters, you are

" Have *chopines* at commandement to an height
" Of life thou canst wish."

See the figure of a Venetian courtezan among the Habiti Antichi, &c. di Cesare Vecellio, p. 114, edit. 1598: and (as Mr. Ritson observes) among the Diversarum Nationum Habitus, Padua, 1592. STEEVENS.

Tom Coryat, in his Crudites, 1611, p. 262, calls them *chapineys*, and gives the following account of them: "There is one thing used of the Venetian women, and some others dwelling in the cities and townes subject to the signiory of Venice, that is not to be observed (I thinke) amongst any other women in Christendome: which is common in Venice, that no woman whatsoever goeth without it, either in her house or abroad, *a thing made of wood and covered with leather of sundry colors, some with white, some redde, some yellow. It is called* a chapiney, *which they wear under their shoes.* Many of them are curiously painted; some also of them I have seen fairly gilt: so uncomely a thing (in my opinion) that it is pitty this foolish custom is not cleane banished and exterminated out of the citie. *There are many of these chapineys of a great height, even half a yard high,* which maketh many of their women that are very short, seeme much taller than the tallest women we have in England. Also I have heard it observed among them, that by how much the nobler a woman is, by so much the higher are her *chapineys*. All their gentlewomen and most of their wives and widowes that are of any wealth, are assisted and supported eyther by men or women, when they walke abroad, to the end they may not fall. They are borne up most commonly by the left arme, otherwise they might quickly take a fall." REED.

Again, in Marston's Dutch Courtezan, 1605: "Dost not weare high corked shoes, *chopines?*"

The word ought rather to be written *chapine*, from *chapin*, Span. which is defined by Minsheu in his Spanish Dictionary: "*a high cork shoe.*" There is no synonymous word in the Italian language, though the Venetian ladies, as we are told by Lassels, "wear high heel'd shoes, like stilts," &c. MALONE.

Mr. Malone was mistaken in saying that there is no word for this in Italian. I find *cioppino* in Veneroni's Dictionary.

BOSWELL.

[6] — be not cracked within the ring.] That is, *cracked too much for use.* This is said to a young player who acted the parts of women. JOHNSON.

I find the same phrase in The Captain, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers[6], fly at any thing we see: We'll have a speech straight: Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1 *Play.* What speech, my lord * ?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once,—but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once: for the play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general[7]: but it was

* Quarto, *my good lord.*

"Come to be married to my lady's woman,
"After she's *crack'd in the ring.*"

Again, in Ben Jonson's Magnetick Lady:

"Light gold, and *crack'd within the ring.*"

Again, in Your Five Gallants, 1608: "Here's Mistresse Rose-noble has lost her maidenhead, *crackt in the ring.*"

Again, in Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks, 1611:

"—— not a penny the worse
"For a little use, *whole within the ring.*"

Again, in Decker's Honest Whore, 1635: "You will not let my oaths be *cracked in the ring*, will you?" Steevens.

The following passage in Lyly's Woman in the Moon, 1597, as well as that in Fletcher's Captain, might lead us to suppose that this phrase sometimes conveyed a wanton allusion: "Well, if she were twenty grains lighter, refuse her, provided always she be not *clipt within the ring.*" T. C.

[6] — like French falconers,] The amusement of falconry was much cultivated in France. In All's Well that Ends Well, Shakspeare has introduced an *astringer* or falconer at the French court. Mr. Tollet, who has mentioned the same circumstance, likewise adds that it is said in Sir Thomas Browne's Tracts, p. 116, that "the *French* seem to have been the first and noblest falconers in the western part of Europe;" and, "that the *French* king sent over his falconers to show that sport to King James the First." See Weldon's Court of King James. Steevens.

"— like *French* falconers." Thus the folio. Quarto:— "like *friendly* falconers." Malone.

[7] — caviare to the general:] Giles Fletcher, in his Russe Commonwealth, 1591, p. 41, says in Russia they have divers kinds of fish "very good and delicate: as the Bellouga & Bellougina of four or five elnes long, the Ositrina & Sturgeon, but not so thick nor long, These four kind of fish breed in the Wolgha and are catched in great plenty, and served thence into

(as I received it, and others, whose judgments *, in such matters, cried in the top of mine [8],) an excellent play; well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty [9] as cunning. I remember, one said, there were no sallets [1] in the lines, to

* First folio, *judgment*.

the whole realme for a good food. Of the roes of these four kinds they make very great store of Icary or *Caveary*." See also, Mr. Ritson's Remarks, &c. on Shakspeare, (edit. 1778,) p. 199. REED.

Ben Jonson has ridiculed the introduction of these foreign delicacies in his Cynthia's Revels: "He doth learn to eat Anchovies, Macaroni, Bovoli, Fagioli, and *Caviare*," &c.

Again, in The Muses' Looking Glass, by Randolph, 1638:

"—— the pleasure that I take in spending it,
"To feed on *caviare*, and eat anchovies."

Again, in The White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona, 1612:

"———— one citizen
"Is lord of two fair manors that call'd you master,
"Only for *caviare*."

Again, in Marston's What You Will, 1607:

"—— a man can scarce eat good meat,
"Anchovies, *caviare*, but he's satired." STEEVENS.

Florio, in his Italian Dictionary, 1598, defines, *Caviaro*, "a kinde of salt meat, used in Italie, like black sope; it is made of the roes of fishes."

Lord Clarendon uses *the general* for *the people*, in the same manner as it is used here: "And so by undervaluing many particulars, (which they truly esteemed,) as rather to be consented to than that *the general* should suffer—." Book v. p. 530. MALONE.

[8] — cried in the top of mine,] i. e. whose judgment I had the highest opinion of. WARBURTON.

I think it means only, that *were higher than mine*. JOHNSON.

Whose judgment, in such matters, was in much higher vogue than mine. HEATH.

Perhaps it means only—whose judgment was more clamorously delivered than mine. We still say of a bawling actor, that he speaks *on the top of his voice*. STEEVENS.

To *over-top* is a hunting term applied to a dog when he gives more tongue than the rest of the cry. To this, I believe, Hamlet refers, and he afterwards mentions a CRY *of players*. HENLEY.

[9] — set down with as much MODESTY —] *Modesty*, for *simplicity*. WARBURTON.

make the matter savoury; nor no matter in the phrase, that might indite the author of affection * [2]: but called it, an honest method [3], as wholesome [4] as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved: 'twas Æneas' tale † to Dido: and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: If it live in your memory, begin at this line; let me see, let me see;—

The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast [5],

—'tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus.

* First folio, *affectation*. † Quarto, *talke*.

[1] — there were no SALLETS, &c.] Such is the reading of the old copies. I know not why the later editors continued to adopt the alteration of Mr. Pope, and read,—no *salt*, &c.

Mr. Pope's alteration may indeed be in some degree supported by the following passage in Decker's Satiromastix, 1602: "—a prepar'd troop of gallants, who shall distaste every *unsalted* line in their fly-blown comedies." Though the other phrase was used as late as in the year 1665, in A Banquet of Jests, &c. "— for junkets, joci; and for curious *sallets*, sales." STEEVENS.

[2] — INDITE the author of affection;] *Indite*, for *convict*. WARBURTON.

"— *indite* the author of *affection*." i. e. convict the author of being a fantastical *affected* writer. Maria calls Malvolio an *affectioned* ass: i. e. an *affected* ass; and in Love's Labour's Lost, Nathaniel tells the Pedant, that his reasons "have been witty, without *affection*."

Again, in the translation of Castiglione's Courtier, by Hobby, 1556: "Among the chiefe conditions and qualityes in a waiting-gentlewoman," is "to flee *affection* or curiosity."

Again, in Chapman's Preface to Ovid's Banquet of Sense, 1595: "Obscuritie in *affection* of words and indigested concets, is pedanticall and childish." STEEVENS.

[3] — but called it, an honest method,] Hamlet is telling how much his judgment differed from that of others. "One said, there were no sallets in the lines," &c. "but called it, an honest method," &c. JOHNSON.

"— an *honest* method." *Honest*, for *chaste*. WARBURTON.

[4] — as wholesome, &c.] This passage was recovered from the quartos by Dr. Johnson. STEEVENS.

Fabula nullius veneris, morataque recte. M. MASON.

[5] *The rugged Pyrrhus*, &c.] Mr. Malone once observed to me, that Mr. Capell supposed the speech uttered by the Player before

The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble

Hamlet, to have been taken from an ancient drama, entitled, "Dido Queen of Carthage." I had not then the means of justifying or confuting his remark, the piece alluded to having escaped the hands of the most liberal and industrious collectors of such curiosities. Since, however, I have met with this performance, and am therefore at liberty to pronounce that it did not furnish our author with more than a general hint for his description of the death of Priam, &c. unless with reference to—

" —— the whiff and *wind* of his fell sword
" The unnerved father falls ——."

we read, ver. * :

" And with the *wind* thereof the king fell down."

and can make out a resemblance between—

" So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood; "

and ver. ** :

" So leaning on his sword, he stood stone still."

The greater part of the following lines are surely more ridiculous in themselves, than even Shakspeare's happiest vein of burlesque or parody could have made them :

" At last came Pirrhus fell and full of ire,
" His harnesse dropping bloud, and on his speare
" The mangled head of Priams yongest sonne;
" And after him his band of Mirmidons,
" With balles of wild-fire in their murdering pawes,
" Which made the funerall flame that burnt faire Troy:
" All which hemd me about, crying, this is he.
" *Dido*. Ah, how could poor Æneas scape their hands?
" *Æn*. My mother Venus, jealous of my health,
" Convaid me from their crooked nets and bands:
" So I escapt the furious Pirrhus wrath,
" Who then ran to the pallace of the King,
" And at Jove's altar finding Priamus,
" About whose witherd neck hung Hecuba,
" Foulding his hand in hers, and joyntly both
" Beating their breasts and falling on the ground,
" He with his faulchions point raisde up at once;
" And with Megeras eyes stared in their face,
" Threatning a thousand deaths at every glaunce.
" To whom the aged king thus trembling spoke: &c.—
" Not mov'd at all, but smiling at his teares,
" This butcher, whil'st his hands were yet held up,
" Treading upon his breast, stroke off his hands.
" *Dido*. O end, Æneas, I can hear no more.
" *Æn*. At which the franticke queene leapt on his face,

When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now is he total gules[6]*; horridly trick'd*[7]
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons;

" And in his eyelids hanging by the nayles,
" A little while prolong'd her husband's life:
" At last the souldiers puld her by the heeles,
" And swong her howling in the emptie ayre,
" Which sent an echo to the wounded king:
" Whereat he lifted up his bedred lims,
" And would have grappeld with Achilles sonne,
" Forgetting both his want of strength and hands;
" Which he disdaining, whiskt his sword about,
* " And with the *wound* thereof the king fell downe:
" Then from the navell to the throat at once,
" He ript old Priam; at whose latter gaspe
" Jove's marble statue gan to bend the brow,
" As lothing Pirrhus for this wicked act:
" Yet he undaunted tooke his father's flagge,
" And dipt it in the old kings chill cold bloud,
" And then in triumph ran into the streetes,
" Through which he could not passe for slaughtred men:
** " So leaning on his sword he stood stone still,
" Viewing the fire wherewith rich Ilion burnt." Act II.

The exact title of the play from which these lines are copied, is as follows: The—Tragedie of Dido | Queen of Carthage | Played by the Children of her | Majesties Chappel. | Written by Christopher Marlowe, and | Thomas Nash, Gent. | —Actors | Jupiter. | Ganimed. | Venus. | Cupid. | Juno. | Mercurie, or —Hermes. | Æneas. | Ascanius. | Dido. | Anna. | Achates. | Ilioneus. | Iarbas. | Cloanthes. Sergestus. | At London, | Printed, by the Widdowe Orwin, for Thomas Woodcocke, and | are to be solde at his shop, in Paules Church-yeard, at | the signe of the black Beare, 1594. | STEEVENS.

[6] *Now is he total* GULES;] *Gules* is a term in the barbarous jargon peculiar to heraldry, and signifies *red*. Shakspeare has it again in Timon of Athens:

" With man's blood paint the ground; *gules, gules.*"

Heywood, in his Second Part of the Iron Age, has made a verb from it:

" —— old Hecuba's reverend locks
" Be *gul'd* in slaughter —." STEEVENS.

[7] —*trick'd*—] i. e. smeared, painted. An heraldick term. See All's Well that Ends Well, Act I. Sc. I. MALONE.

Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and a damned light
*To their lord's murder * : Roasted in wrath, and*
fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles [8], *the hellish Pyrrhus*
Old grandsire Priam seeks;—So proceed you [9].
Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken; with good accent, and good discretion.
1 *Play. Anon he finds him*
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command: Unequal match'd †,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage, strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base; and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for, lo! his sword
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i'the air to stick:
So, as a painted tyrant [1], *Pyrrhus stood;*
And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.
But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below

* First folio, *vilde murthers.* † First folio, *match.*

[8] *With eyes like* CARBUNCLES,] So, in Milton's Paradise Lost, b. ix. l. 500:
"—— and *carbuncles* his *eyes*." STEEVENS.

[9] So proceed you.] These words are not in the folio. MALONE.

[1] —*as a* PAINTED *tyrant*,] Shakspeare was probably here thinking of the tremendous personages often represented in old tapestry, whose uplifted swords *stick in the air*, and *do nothing*.
Among the Harleian MSS. 2011, Art. 19, there is a delineation of the noble House of Lusignan; a printed paper, with a wooden cut, in which Selimus the Second is exactly Shakspeare's *painted tyrant*. MALONE.

As hush as death[2]*: anon the dreadful thunder*
Doth rend the region: So, after Pyrrhus' pause,
A roused vengeance sets him new a-work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour[3]*, forg'd for proof eterne,*
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.—
Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!

POL. This is too long.

HAM. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—Pr'ythee, say on:—He's for a jig, or a tale of bawdry[4], or he sleeps:—say on: come to Hecuba.

1 PLAY. *But who, ah woe*[5]*! had seen the mobled queen*[6]*——*

[2] *— as we often see,* AGAINST SOME STORM,——
The bold WINDS *speechless, and the orb below*
As HUSH *as death*:] So, in Venus and Adonis:
"Even as the *wind is hush'd before it raineth.*"
This line leads me to suspect that Shakspeare wrote—the bold *wind* speechless. Many similar mistakes have happened in these plays, where the word ends with the same letter with which the next begins. MALONE.

[3] *And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall*
On Mars's armour, &c.] This thought appears to have been adopted from the 3d Book of Sidney's Arcadia: "Vulcan, when he wrought at his wive's request Æneas an armour, made not his hammer beget a greater sound than the swords of those noble knights did," &c. STEEVENS.

[4] — He's for a JIG, or a tale of bawdry,] See note on "—— your only *jig-maker,*" Act III. Sc. II. STEEVENS.

A *jig*, in our poet's time, signified a ludicrous metrical composition as well as a dance. Here it is used in the former sense. So, in Florio's Italian Dict. 1591: "Frottola, a countrie *jigg*, or round, or countrie song, or wanton verses." See The Historical Account of the English Stage, &c. vol. iii. MALONE.

[5] *But who,* AH *woe!*] Thus the quarto, except that it has—*a* woe. *A* is printed instead of *ah* in various places in the old

Ham. The mobled queen?
Pol. That's good; mobled queen is good.
1 *Play. Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning the flames*
With bisson rheum[7]*; a clout upon that head,*
Where late the diaaem stood; and, for a robe,

copies. *Woe* was formerly used adjectively for *woeful.* So, in Antony and Cleopatra:

" Woe, woe are we, sir, you may not live to wear
" All your true followers out."

The folio reads—But who, *O who*, &c. MALONE.

[6] —*the* MOBLED *queen*—] *Mobled* or *mabled* signifies *veiled.* So, Sandys, speaking of the Turkish women, says, their heads and faces are *mabled* in fine linen, that no more is to be seen of them than their eyes. *Travels.* WARBURTON.

Mobled signifies *huddled, grossly covered.* JOHNSON.

I meet with this word in Shirley's Gentleman of Venice:

" The moon does *mobble* up herself." FARMER.

Mobled is, I believe, no more than a depravation of *muffled.* It is thus corrupted in Ogilby's Fables, Second Part:

" *Mobbled* nine days in my considering cap,
" Before my eyes beheld the blessed day."

In the West this word is still used in the same sense; and that is the meaning of *mobble* in Dr. Farmer's quotation.

HOLT WHITE.

The *mabled* queen, (or *mobled* queen, as it is spelt in the quarto,) means, the queen attired in a large, coarse, and careless head-dress. A few lines lower we are told that she had "a *clout* upon that head, where late the diadem stood."

To *mab*, (which in the North is pronounced *mob*, and hence the spelling of the old copy in the present instance,) says Ray in his Dict. of North Country words, is "to dress carelessly. *Mabs are slatterns.*"

The ordinary morning head-dress of ladies continued to be distinguished by the name of a *mab*, to almost the end of the reign of George the Second. The folio reads—the *inobled* queen. MALONE.

In the counties of Essex and Middlesex, this morning cap has always been called—a *mob*, and not a *mab*. My spelling of the word therefore agrees with its most familiar pronunciation.

STEEVENS.

[7] *With* BISSON *rheum;*] *Bisson* or *beesen*, i. e. blind. A word still in use in some parts of the North of England.

So, in Coriolanus: "What harm can your *bisson* conspectuities glean out of this character?" STEEVENS.

About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd:
But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs;
The instant burst of clamour that she made,
(Unless things mortal move them not at all,)
Would have made milch [8] *the burning eye of heaven,*
And passion in the gods.

Pol. Look, whether he has not turned his colour, and has tears in's eyes.—Pr'ythee, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon.—Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstract *, and brief chronicles, of the time: After your death you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live †.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. Odd's bodikin, man, much better: Use every man after his desert, and who shall § 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity: The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs.

[*Exit Polonius, with some of the Players.*

Ham. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-

* First folio, *abstracts*. † First folio, *lived*.
‡ First folio, *should*.

8 —*made* MILCH—] Drayton in the 13th Song of his Polyolbion gives this epithet to dew: "Exhaling the *milch* dew," &c. STEEVENS.

morrow.—Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the murder of Gonzago?

1 *Play.* Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll have it to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down, and insert in't? could you not?

1 *Play.* Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well.—Follow that lord; and look you mock him not. [*Exit I layer.*] My good friends, [*To Ros. and Guil.*] I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good my lord!

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Ham. Ay, so, good bye to you:—Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous, that this player here [9],
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,

9 Is it not monstrous, that this player here,] It should seem from the complicated nature of such parts as Hamlet, Lear, &c. that the time of Shakspeare had produced some excellent performers. He would scarce have taken the pains to form characters which he had no prospect of seeing represented with force and propriety on the stage.

His plays indeed, by their own power, must have given a different turn to acting, and almost new-created the performers of his age. Mysteries, Moralities, and Enterludes, afforded no materials for art to work on, no discriminations of character or variety of appropriated language. From Tragedies like Cambyses, Tamburlaine, and Jeronymo, nature was wholly banished; and the comedies of Gammer Gurton, Common Condycyons, and The Old Wives Tale, might have had justice done to them by the lowest order of human beings.

Sanctius his animal, mentisque capacius altæ,

was wanting, when the dramas of Shakspeare made their first appearance; and to these we were certainly indebted for the excellence of actors who could never have improved so long as their sensibilities were unawakened, their memories burthened only by pedantick or puritanical declamation, and their manners vulgarized by pleasantry of as low an origin. Steevens.

Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That, from her working, all his visage wann'd [1];
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspéct * [2],

* Quarto, *in his aspect*.

[1] — all his visage WANN'D ;] [The folio *warm'd*.] This might do, did not the old quarto lead us to a more exact and pertinent reading, which is—visage *wan'd ;* i. e. turned *pale* or *wan*. For so the visage appears when the mind is thus affected, and not *warm'd* or flush'd. WARBURTON.

[2] That, from her working, all his visage WANN'D ;
TEARS IN HIS EYES, DISTRACTION in's aspéct,] *Wan'd* (*wann'd* it should have been spelt,) is the reading of the quarto, which Dr. Warburton, I think rightly, restored. The folio reads *warm'd*, for which Mr. Steevens contends in the following note :

"The working of the soul, and the effort to shed tears, will give a colour to the actor's face, instead of taking it away. The visage is always *warm'd* and flush'd by any unusual exertion in a passionate speech ; but no performer was ever yet found, I believe, whose feelings were of such exquisite sensibility as to produce paleness in any situation in which the drama could place him. But if players were indeed possessed of that power, there is no such circumstance in the speech uttered before Hamlet, as could introduce the *wanness* for which Dr. Warburton contends." The same expression, however, is found in the fourth book of Stanyhurst's translation of the Æneid :

"And eke all her visage *waning* with murther approaching."

Whether an actor *can produce paleness*, it is, I think, unnecessary to enquire. That Shakspeare *thought* he could, and considered the speech in question as likely to produce *wanness*, is proved decisively by the words which he has put into the mouth of Polonius in this scene ; which add such support to the original reading, that I have without hesitation restored it. Immediately after the Player has finished his speech, Polonius exclaims,

"Look, whether he has not *turned his colour*, and has *tears in his eyes*." Here we find the effort to shed tears, *taking away*, not *giving* a colour. If it be objected, that by *turned his colour*, Shakspeare meant that the player *grew red*, a passage in King Richard III. in which the poet is again describing an actor, who is master of his art, will at once answer the objection :

"*Rich.* Come, cousin, canst thou *quake*, and *change thy colour?*
"Murder thy breath in middle of a word ;
"And then again begin, and stop again,
"As if thou wert *distraught and mad with terror?*

A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!
For Hecuba?
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba *[3],
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion[4],
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear[5] with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty, and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant; and amaze, indeed,
The very faculties † of eyes and ears. Yet I,

* Quarto, *to her*. † First folio, *faculty*.

" *Buck*. Tut, I can counterfeit the *deep tragedian*,
" *Tremble* and start at wagging of a straw," &c.

The words *quake*, and *terror*, and *tremble*, as well as the whole context, show, that by "*change thy colour*," Shakspeare meant *grow pale*. Gildon, in his observations on Hamlet, asserts, that he has seen Mrs. Barry change colour on the stage. MALONE.

The word *aspect* (as Dr. Farmer very properly observes) was in Shakspeare's time accented on the second syllable. The folio exhibits the passage as I have printed it. STEEVENS.

[3] What's Hecuba to him, &c.] It is plain Shakspeare alludes to a story told of Alexander the cruel tyrant of Pherae in Thessaly, who seeing a famous tragedian act in the Troades of Euripides, was so sensibly touched that he left the theatre before the play was ended; being ashamed, as he owned, that he who never pitied those he murdered, should weep at the sufferings of *Hecuba* and Andromache. See Plutarch in the Life of Pelopidas. UPTON.

Shakspeare, it is highly probable, had read the life of Pelopidas, but I see no ground for supposing there is here an allusion to it. Hamlet is not ashamed of being seen to weep at a theatrical exhibition, but mortified that a player, in *a dream of passion*, should appear more agitated by fictitious sorrow, than the prince was by a real calamity. MALONE.

[4] — the cue for passion,] The *hint*, the *direction*. JOHNSON.

This phrase is theatrical, and occurs at least a dozen times in our author's plays. Thus, says Quince to Flute in A Midsummer-Night's Dream: " You speak all your part at once, *cues* and all." STEEVENS.

[5] — the general ear —] The ear of all mankind. So before,— " Caviare to *the general*," that is, to the *multitude*. JOHNSON.

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John a-dreams [6], unpregnant of my cause [7],
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property, and most dear life,
A damn'd defeat was made [8]. Am I a coward?

[6] Like JOHN A-DREAMS,] *John a-dreams*, i. e. *of dreams*, means only *John* the *dreamer;* a nick-name, I suppose, for any ignorant silly fellow. Thus the puppet formerly thrown at during the season of Lent, was called *Jack-a-lent*, and the ignis fatuus *Jack-a-lanthorn*.

At the beginning of Arthur Hall's translation of the second book of Homer's Iliad, 1581, we are told of Jupiter, that—

" *John dreaming* God he callde to him, that God, chiefe God of il,

" Common cole carrier of every lye," &c.

John-a-droynes however, if not a corruption of this nick-name, seems to have been some well-known character, as I have met with more than one allusion to him. So, in Have With You to Saffron Walden, or Gabriel Harvey's Hunt is Up, by Nashe, 1596: " The description of that poor *John-a-droynes* his man, whom he had hired," &c. *John-a-Droynes* is likewise a foolish character in Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra, 1578, who is seized by informers, has not much to say in his defence, and is cheated out of his money. STEEVENS.

[7] — UNPREGNANT of my cause,] *Unpregnant*, for *having no due sense of*. WARBURTON.

Rather, ' not quickened with a new desire of vengeance; not teeming with revenge.' JOHNSON.

[8] A damn'd DEFEAT was made.] *Defeat*, for *destruction*. WARBURTON.

Rather, *dispossession*. JOHNSON.

The word *defeat*, (which certainly means *destruction* in the present instance,) is very licentiously used by the old writers. Shakspeare in Othello employs it yet more quaintly:—" *Defeat* thy favour with an usurped beard;" and Middleton, in his comedy called Any Thing for a Quiet Life, says—" I have heard of your *defeat* made upon a mercer."

Again, in Revenge for Honour, by Chapman:

" That he might meantime *make* a sure *defeat*
" On our good aged father's life."

Again, in The Wits, by Sir W. D'Avenant, 1637: " Not all the skill I have, can pronounce him free of *the defeat upon* my gold and jewels."

Again, in The Isle of Gulls, 1606: " My late shipwreck has made a *defeat* both of my friends and treasure." STEEVENS.

Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i'the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
Ha!
Why *, I should take it: for it cannot be,
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter; or, ere this,
I should have fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal: Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless [9] villain!
Why, what an ass am I? This is most brave [1];
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd †, [2]
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a cursing, like a very drab,

* Quarto, *Swounds.*
† First folio, *the dear murthered;* quarto, *a dear murthered.*

In the passage quoted from Othello, to *defeat* is used for *undo* or *alter: defaire*, Fr. See Minsheu in v. Minsheu considers the substantives *defeat* and *defeature* as synonymous. The former he defines *an overthrow;* the latter, *execution or slaughter of men.* In King Henry V. we have a similar phraseology:

"*Making defeat upon* the powers of France."

And the word is again used in the same sense in the last Act of this play:

"——— Their *defeat*
"Doth by their own insinuation grow." MALONE.

9 — kindless —] Unnatural. JOHNSON.

1 Why, what an ass am I? This is most brave;] The folio reads:

"O vengeance!
"Who? what an ass am I? Aye sure this is most brave."
STEEVENS.

2 A dear FATHER murdered.] *Father* is not to be found either in the first quarto or the first folio, and is perhaps unnecessary. The *dear murthered*, for the *dear person murthered*, is very far from being a harsh ellipsis. BOSWELL.

A scullion [2] !
Fye upon't ! foh ! About my brains [3] ! Humph ! I
have heard,
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play [4],
Have by the very cunning of the scene

[2] A SCULLION !] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*stallion.* STEEVENS.

[3] — About my brains !] Wits, to your work. *Brain,* go *about* the present business. JOHNSON.

This expression (which seems a parody on the naval one,—*about ship !*) occurs in the Second Part of the Iron Age, by Heywood, 1632:

" *My brain about* again ! for thou hast found
" New projects now to work on."

About, my brain ! therefore, (as Mr. M. Mason observes) appears to signify, " be my thoughts shifted into a contrary direction." STEEVENS.

[4] ——— I have heard,
That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,] A number of these stories are collected together by Thomas Heywood, in his Actor's Vindication. STEEVENS.

So, in A Warning for Faire Women, 1599:

" Ile tell you, sir, one more to quite your tale.
" A woman that had made away her husband,
" And sitting to behold a tragedy
" At Linne a towne in Norffolke,
" Acted by players trauelling that way,
" Wherein a woman that had murtherd hers
" Was euer haunted with her husbands ghost:
" The passion written by a feeling pen,
" And acted by a good tragedian,
" She was so mooued with the sight thereof,
" As she cryed out, the play was made by her,
" And openly confesst her husbands murder." TODD.

These lines are thus exhibited in the old copies. In the quarto:

" And fal a cursing, like a very drabbe; stallion ! fie upon't ! foh !
" About my braines ! hum ! I have heard," &c.

In the folio:

" And fall a cursing, like a very drab,
" A scullion ! fie upon't: foh ! about my braine !
" I have heard that guilty creatures, sitting at a play—."

BOSWELL.

Been struck so to the soul, that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father,
Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him [5] to the quick; if he do blench [6],
I know my course. The spirit, that I have seen,
May be a devil: and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and, perhaps,
Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
(As he is very potent with such spirits,)
Abuses me to damn me: I'll have grounds
More relative than this [7]: The play's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.
[*Exit.*

ACT III. SCENE I.

A Room in the Castle.

Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

King. And can you, by no drift of conference [8],

[5] — tent him —] Search his wounds. Johnson.

[6] — if he do BLENCH,] If he *shrink*, or *start*. The word is used by Fletcher, in The Night-walker:

"*Blench* at no danger, though it be a gallows."

Again, in Gower, De Confessione Amantis, lib. vi. fol. 128:

"Without *blenchinge* of mine eie."

Chaucer, in his Knightes Tale, v. 1080, seems to use the verb—to *blent* in a similar sense:

"And therwithal he *blent* and cried, a!" Steevens.

[7] More RELATIVE than this:] *Relative*, for *convictive*. Warburton.

Convictive is only the consequential sense. *Relative* is *nearly related, closely connected*. Johnson.

Get from him, why he puts on this confusion;
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess, he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded;
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply[9].

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players

[8] — conference —] The folio reads—*circumstance*. STEEVENS.

[9] NIGGARD of question; but, of our demands,
MOST FREE in his reply.] This is given as the description of the conversation of a man whom the speaker *found not forward to be sounded;* and who *kept aloof* when they would *bring him to confession:* but such a description can never pass but at cross-purposes. Shakspeare certainly wrote it just the other way:

Most free of question; but, of our demands,
Niggard in his reply.

That this is the true reading, we need but turn back to the preceding scene, for Hamlet's conduct, to be satisfied. WARBURTON.

Warburton forgets that by *question*, Shakspeare does not usually mean *interrogatory*, but *discourse;* yet in which ever sense the word be taken, this account given by Rosencrantz agrees but ill with the scene between him and Hamlet, as actually represented. M. MASON.

Slow to begin conversation, but free enough in his answers to our demands. Guildenstern has just said that Hamlet kept aloof when they wished to bring him to confess the cause of his distraction: Rosencrantz therefore here must mean, that *up to that point*, till they touch'd on that, he was free enough in his answers. MALONE.

We o'er-raught on the way[1]: of these we told
him;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it: They are about the court;
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true:
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties,
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much
content me
To hear him so inclin'd.
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too *:
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither;
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here[2]
Affront Ophelia[3]:
Her father, and myself (lawful espials[4],)

* Quarto, *two*.

[1] — o'er-raught on the way:] *O'er-raught* is *over-reached*, that is, *over-took*. Johnson.

So, in Spenser's Fairy Queen, b. vi. c. iii:

"Having hy chance a close advantage view'd,
"He *over-raught* him," &c.

Again, in the 5th Book of Gawin Douglas's translation of the Æneid:

"War not the samyn mysfortoun me *over-raucht*."

Steevens.

[2] — may here —] The folio, (I suppose by an error of the press,) reads—may *there*—. Steevens.

[3] — Affront Ophelia:] To *affront*, is only *to meet directly*. Johnson.

Affrontare, Ital. So, in The Devil's Charter, 1607:

"*Affronting* that port where proud Charles should enter.'

Again, in Sir W. D'Avenant's Cruel Brother, 1630:

"In sufferance *affronts* the winter's rage?" Steevens.

[4] — espials—,)] i. e. spies. So, in King Henry VI. P. I.:

"——— as he march'd along,

Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge;
And gather by him, as he is behav'd,
If't be the affliction of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.

QUEEN. I shall obey you:
And, for your part [5], Ophelia, I do wish,
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness: so shall I hope, your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

OPH. Madam, I wish it may.

[*Exit* QUEEN.

POL. Ophelia, walk you here:—Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves:—Read on this book;

[*To* OPHELIA.

That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness [6].—We are oft to blame in this,—
'Tis too much prov'd [7],—that, with devotion's visage,
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

KING. O, 'tis too true! how smart
A lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plast'ring art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it [8],

" By your *espials* were discovered
" Two mightier troops."
See also, King Henry VI. P. I. Act I. Sc. IV.
The words—" lawful espials," are found only in the folio.
STEEVENS.

[5] And, for YOUR part,] Thus the quarto 1604, and the folio. The modern editors, following a quarto of no authority, read—for *my* part. MALONE.

[6] Your LONELINESS.] Thus the folio. The first and second quartos read—*lowliness*. STEEVENS.

[7] 'Tis too much prov'd,] It is found by too frequent experience. JOHNSON.

[8] — more ugly TO the thing that helps it,] That is, *compared with* the thing that helps it. JOHNSON.

Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burden! [*Aside.*

Pol. I hear him coming; let's withdraw, my lord. [*Exeunt King and Polonius.*

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. To be, or not to be[9], that is the question:—

So, Ben Jonson:

"All that they did was piety *to* this." Steevens.

9 To be, or not to be,] Of this celebrated soliloquy, which bursting from a man distracted with contrariety of desires, and overwhelmed with the magnitude of his own purposes, is connected rather in the speaker's mind, than on his tongue, I shall endeavour to discover the train, and to show how one sentiment produces another.

Hamlet, knowing himself injured in the most enormous and atrocious degree, and seeing no means of redress, but such as must expose him to the extremity of hazard, meditates on his situation in this manner: *Before I can form any rational scheme of action under this pressure of distress*, it is necessary to decide, whether, *after our present state, we are* to be, or not to be. That is the question, which, as it shall be answered, will determine, *whether 'tis nobler*, and more suitable to the dignity of reason, *to suffer the outrages of fortune* patiently, or to take arms against *them*, and by opposing end them, *though perhaps* with the loss of life. If *to die*, were *to sleep, no more, and by asleep to end* the miseries of our nature, such a sleep were *devoutly to be wished;* but if *to sleep* in death, be *to dream*, to retain our powers of sensibility, we must *pause* to consider, *in that sleep of death what dreams may come.* This consideration *makes calamity* so long endured; *for who would bear* the vexations of life, which might be ended *by a bare bodkin*, but that he is afraid of something in unknown futurity? This fear it is that gives efficacy to conscience, which, by turning the mind upon *this regard*, chills the ardour of *resolution*, checks the vigour of *enterprize*, and makes the *current* of desire stagnate in inactivity.

We may suppose that he would have applied these general observations to his own case, but that he discovered Ophelia.

Johnson.

Dr. Johnson's explication of the first five lines of this passage is surely wrong. Hamlet is not deliberating whether after our present state we are to exist or not, but whether he should continue to live, or put an end to his life: as is pointed out by the second and the three following lines, which are manifestly a paraphrase on the first: "whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer, &c. or to take

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune [1];
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles [2],

arms." The question concerning our existence in a future state is not considered till the tenth line:—"To sleep! perchance, to *dream;*" &c. The train of Hamlet's reasoning from the middle of the fifth line, "If to die, were to sleep," &c. Dr. Johnson has marked out with his usual accuracy.

In our poet's Rape of Lucrece we find the same question stated, which is proposed in the beginning of the present soliloquy:

"——with herself she is in mutiny,
"To *live or die, which of the twain were better.*" MALONE.

[1] ——ARROWS of outrageous FORTUNE:] "Homines nos ut esse meminerimus, eâ lege natos, ut omnibus *telis fortunæ* proposita sit vita nostra." *Cic. Epist. Fam.* v. 16. STEEVENS.

[2] Or to take arms against A SEA of troubles,] *A sea of troubles* among the Greeks grew into a proverbial usage; *κακῶν θαλασσα, κακῶν τριχυμία.* So that the expression figuratively means, the troubles of human life, which flow in upon us, and encompass us round, like a sea. THEOBALD.

Mr. Pope proposed *siege.* I know not why there should be so much solicitude about this metaphor. Shakspeare breaks his metaphors often, and in this desultory speech there was less need of preserving them. JOHNSON.

A similar phrase occurs in Rycharde Morysine's translation of Ludovicus Vives's Introduction to Wysedome, 1544: "—how great a *sea* of *euils* euery day ouerunneth," &c.

The change, however, which Mr. Pope would recommend, may be justified from a passage in Romeo and Juliet, scene the last:

"You—to remove that *siege of grief* from her—."
STEEVENS.

One cannot but wonder that the smallest doubt should be entertained concerning an expression which is so much in Shakspeare's manner; yet, to preserve the integrity of the metaphor, Dr. Warburton reads *assail* of troubles. In the Prometheus Vinctus of Æschylus, a similar imagery is found:

Δυσχειμερον γε πελαγος ατηρας δυης.
"The stormy *sea* of dire *calamity.*"

And in the same play, as an anonymous writer has observed, (Gent. Magazine, [Aug.] 1772,) we have a metaphor no less harsh than that of the text:

Θολεροι δε λογοι παιουσ' εικη
Στυγνης προς κυμασιν ατης.
"My plaintive *words* in vain confusedly beat
"Against the *waves of hateful misery.*"

And, by opposing, end them?—To die,—to sleep[3],—
No more;—and, by a sleep, to say we end
The heart-ach, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to,—'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die;—to sleep;—
To sleep! perchance to dream;—ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil[4],
Must give us pause: There's the respect[5],
That makes calamity of so long life:
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time[6],

Shakspeare might have found the very phrase that he has employed, in The Tragedy of Queen Cordila, Mirrour for Magistrates, 1575, which undoubtedly he read:

"For lacke of frendes to tell my *seas of* giltlesse *smart*."

MALONE.

Menander uses this very expression. *Fragm.* p. 22. *Amstel.* 12mo. 1719:

Εις πελαγος αυτον εμβαλεις γαρ πραγματων.

"In *mare molestiarum* te conjicies." HOLT WHITE.

A Spanish translator of Hamlet, Madrid, 1798, either from a wish to avoid this broken metaphor, or from misunderstanding the original, has supposed it to mean, raising up your arms as you would *in swimming against a sea* of troubles, "ú oponer *los brazos* á este torrente de calamidades." BOSWELL.

[3] — To die,—to sleep,] This passage is ridiculed in The Scornful Lady of Beaumont and Fletcher, as follows:

"—— be deceased, that is, asleep, for so the word is taken. *To sleep, to die; to die, to sleep;* a very figure, sir," &c. &c.

STEEVENS.

[4] — shuffled off this mortal COIL,] i. e. turmoil, bustle.

WARBURTON.

A passage resembling this, occurs in a poem entitled A Dolfull Discours of Two Strangers, a Lady and a Knight, published by Churchyard, among his Chippes, 1575:

"Yea, *shaking off this sinfull soyle,*
"Me thincke in cloudes I see,
"Among the perfite chosen lambs,
"A place preparde for mee." STEEVENS.

[5] There's the RESPECT,] i. e. the consideration. See Troilus and Cressida, Act II. Sc. II. MALONE.

[6] — the whips and scorns OF TIME,] The evils here com-

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely[7],
The pangs of despis'd love[8], the law's delay,

plained of are not the product of time or duration simply, but of a corrupted age or manners. We may be sure, then, that Shakspeare wrote:

'—— the whips and scorns *of th' time.*'

and the description of the evils of a corrupt age, which follows, confirms this emendation. WARBURTON.

It may be remarked, that Hamlet, in his enumeration of miseries, forgets, whether properly or not, that he is a prince, and mentions many evils to which inferior stations only are exposed. JOHNSON.

I think we might venture to read—'the whips and scorns o' the *times*,' i. e. times satirical as the age of Shakspeare, which probably furnished him with the idea.

In the reigns of Elizabeth and James (particularly in the former) there was more illiberal private abuse and peevish satire published, than in any others I ever knew of, except the present one. I have many of these publications, which were almost all pointed at individuals.

Daniel, in his Musophilus, 1599, has the same complaint:

"Do you not see these pamphlets, *libels*, rhimes,
"These strange confused tumults of the mind,
"Are grown to be the sickness *of these times*,
"The great disease inflicted on mankind?"

Whips and *scorns* are surely as inseparable companions, as *publick punishment* and *infamy*.

Quips, the word which Dr. Johnson would introduce, is derived, by all etymologists, from *whips*.

Hamlet is introduced as reasoning on a question of general concernment. He therefore takes in all such evils as could befall mankind in general, without considering himself at present as a prince, or wishing to avail himself of the few exemptions which high place might once have claimed.

In Part of King James I'st. Entertainment passing to his Coronation, by Ben Jonson and Decker, is the following line, and note on that line:

"And first account of years, of months, *of time*."

"By *time* we understand *the present*." This explanation affords the sense for which I have contended, and without change. STEEVENS.

Time, for *the times*, is used by Jonson in Every Man out of His Humour:

"Oh how I hate the monstrousness of *time*."

So, in Basse's Sword and Buckler, 1602:

The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin [9]? who would fardels * bear,

* First folio, *these fardels.*

"If I should touch particularly all
"Wherein the moodie spleene of captious *Time*
"Doth tax our functions—."

So also, to give a prose instance, in Cardanus Comfort, translated by Thomas Bedingfield, 1576, we have a description of the miseries of life, strongly resembling that in the text: "Hunger, thurste, sleape not so plentiful or quiet as deade mē have, heate in sommer, colde in winter, *disorder of tyme*, terroure of warres, controlement of parentes, cares of wedlocke, studye for children, slouthe of servauntes, *contention of sutes*, and that (whiche is moste of all) the *condicion of tyme* wherein *honestye is disdaynd*, as folye and crafte is honoured as wisedome." BOSWELL.

The word *whips* is used by Marston in his Satires, 1599, in the sense required here:

"Ingenuous melancholy,——
"Inthrone thee in my blood; let me entreat,
"Stay his quick jocund skips, and force him run
"A sad-pac'd course, untill my *whips* be done." MALONE.

[7] — the PROUD man's contumely,] Thus the quarto. The folio reads—"the *poor* man's contumely;" the contumely which the poor man is obliged to endure:

Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se,
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit. MALONE.

[8] — of DESPIS'D love,] The folio reads—of *dispriz'd* love. STEEVENS.

[9] — might his QUIETUS make
With a bare BODKIN?] The first expression probably alluded to the writ of discharge, which was formerly granted to those barons and knights who personally attended the king on any foreign expedition. This discharge was called a *quietus*.

It is at this time the term for the acquittance which every sheriff receives on settling his accounts at the Exchequer.

The word is used for the discharge of an account, by Webster, in his Duchess of Malfy, 1623:

"And 'cause you shall not come to me in debt,
"(Being now my steward) here upon your lips
"I sign your *quietus est*."

Again:

"You had the trick in audit time to be sick,
"Till I had sign'd your *quietus*."

To grunt and sweat [9] under a weary life;
But that the dread of something after death,—

A *bodkin* was the ancient term for a *small dagger*, So, in the Second Part of The Mirrour for Knighthood, 4to. bl. l. 1598: "— Not having any more weapons but a poor poynado, which usually he did weare about him, and taking it in his hand, delivered these speeches unto it. Thou, silly *bodkin*, shalt finish the piece of worke," &c.

In the margin of Stowe's Chronicle, edit. 1614, it is said, that Cæsar was slain with *bodkins;* and in The Muses' Looking-Glass, by Randolph, 1638:

"*Apho.* A rapier's but a *bodkin.*
"*Deil.* And a *bodkin*
"Is a most dang'rous weapon; since I read
"Of Julius Cæsar's death, I durst not venture
"Into a taylor's shop, for fear of *bodkins.*"

Again, in The Custom of the Country, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"—— Out with your *bodkin*,
"Your pocket dagger, your stilletto—."

Again, in Sapho and Phao, 1591: "—— there will be a desperate fray between two, made at all weapons, from the brown bill to the *bodkin.*"

Again, in Chaucer, as he is quoted at the end of a pamphlet called The Serpent of Division, &c. whereunto is annexed the Tragedy of Gorboduc, &c. 1591:

"With *bodkins* was Cæsar Julius
"Murdered at Rome of Brutus Crassus." STEEVENS.

By "a *bare* bodkin," does not perhaps mean, "by so *little* an instrument as a dagger," but "*by an unsheathed dagger.*"

In the account which Mr. Steevens has given of the original meaning of the term *quietus*, after the words, "who personally attended the king on any foreign expedition," should have been added,—'and were therefore exempted from the claims of scutage, or a tax on every knight's fee.' MALONE.

[9] To GRUNT and sweat —] Thus the old copies. It is undoubtedly the true reading, but can scarcely be borne by modern ears. JOHNSON.

This word occurs in The Death of Zoroas, by Nicholas Grimoald, a translation of a passage in the Alexandreis of Philippe Gualtier, into blank verse, printed at the end of Lord Surrey's Poems:

"—— none the charge doth give:
"Here *grunts*, here grones, echwhere strong youth is spent."

And Stanyhurst, in his translation of Virgil, 1582, for supremum *congemuit*, gives us; "—— for sighing it *grunts.*" Again,

The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns [1],—puzzles the will :

in Turbervile's translation of Ovid's Epistle from Canace to Macareus ;

" What might I miser do ? greefe forst me *grunt*."

Again, in the same translator's Hypermnestra to Lynceus:

" —— round about I heard
" Of dying men the *grunts*."

The change made by the editors [to *groan*] is however supported by the following line in Julius Cæsar, Act IV. Sc. I. :

" To *groan* and sweat under the business." STEEVENS.

I apprehend that it is the duty of an editor to exhibit what his author wrote, and not to substitute what may appear to the present age preferable: and Dr. Johnson was of the same opinion. See his note on the word *hugger-mugger*, Act IV. Sc. V. I have therefore, though with some reluctance, adhered to the old copies, however unpleasing this word may be to the ear. On the stage, without doubt, an actor is at liberty to substitute a less offensive word. To the ears of our ancestors it probably conveyed no unpleasing sound; for we find it used by Chaucer and others :

" But never *gront* he at no stroke but on,
" Or elles at two, but if his storie lie."
The Monkes Tale, v. 14,627, Tyrwhitt's edit.

Again, in Wily Beguil'd, written before 1596 :

" She's never well, but *grunting* in a corner." MALONE.

[1] The UNDISCOVER'D country, from whose bourn
No TRAVELLER returns,] This has been cavilled at by Lord Orrery and others, but without reason. The idea of a *traveller* in Shakspeare's time, was of a person who gave an account of his adventures. Every voyage was a *Discovery*. John Taylor has " *A Discovery* by Sea from London to Salisbury." FARMER.

Again, Marston's Insatiate Countess, 1603 :

" —— wrestled with death,
" From whose stern cave none tracks a backward path."
Qui nunc it per iter tenebricosum
Illuc unde negant redire quenquam. *Catullus*.

Again, in Sandford's translation of Cornelius Agrippa, &c. 4to. bl. l. 1569 (once a book of uncommon popularity) : " The *countrie* of the dead is irremeable, that they *cannot retourne*." Sig. P p. Again, in Cymbeline, says the Gaoler to Posthumus : " How you shall speed in your journey's end [after execution] I think you'll *never return to tell one*." STEEVENS.

This passage has been objected to by others on a ground which, at the first view of it, seems more plausible. Hamlet himself, it is objected, has had ocular demonstration that travellers do sometimes return from this strange country.

And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all [2];
see note p. 329.
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;

I formerly thought this an inconsistency. But this objection is also founded on a mistake. Our poet without doubt in the passage before us intended to say, that from the *unknown* regions of the dead no traveller returns with all his *corporeal powers*; such as he who goes on a voyage of *discovery* brings back, when he returns to the port from which he sailed. The traveller whom Hamlet had seen, though he appeared in the same habit which he had worn in his life time, was nothing but a shadow; "invulnerable as the air," and consequently *incorporeal*.

If, says the objector, the traveller has reached this coast, it is not an undiscovered country. But by *undiscovered* Shakspeare meant not undiscovered by departed spirits, but, undiscovered, or unknown to "such fellows as us, who crawl beneath earth and heaven;" *superis incognita tellus*. In this sense every country, of which the traveller does not return *alive* to give *an account*, may be said to be *undiscovered*. The Ghost has given us no account of the region from whence he came, being, as he himself informed us, "forbid to tell the secrets of his prison-house."

Marlowe, before our poet, had compared death to a journey to an undiscovered country:

"———————— weep not for Mortimer,
"That scorns the world, and, as a *traveller*,
"Goes to *discover countries* yet unknown."
King Edward II. 1598 (written before 1593).
MALONE.

Perhaps this is another instance of Shakspeare's acquaintance with the Bible: "Afore I goe thither, from *whence I shall not turne againe*, even to the lande of darknesse and shadowe of death; yea into that darke cloudie lande and deadlye shadowe whereas is no order, but terrible feare as in the darknesse."
Job, ch. x.

"The way that I must goe is at hande, but *whence* I shall *not turne againe*." *Ibid.* ch. xvi.

I quote Cranmer's Bible. DOUCE.

[2] Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;] "I'll not meddle with it: *it makes a man a coward*." *Richard III.* Act I. Sc. IV.

"*O coward conscience*, how dost thou afflict me." *Ibid.* Act V. Sc. III. BLAKEWAY.

And enterprizes of great pith [3] and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn awry [4],
And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now!
The fair Ophelia:—Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd [5].

Oph. Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well *.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I;
I never gave you aught †.

Oph. My honour'd lord, you ‡ know right well, you did;
And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind,
Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord?

Ham. Are you fair?

* First folio, *well, well, well.*
† First folio, *No, no, I never gave you aught.*
‡ First folio, *I.*

3 —great PITH —] Thus the folio. The quartos read—of great *pitch*. STEEVENS.

Pitch seems to be the better reading. The allusion is to the *pitching* or throwing the *bar*;—a manly exercise, usual in country villages. RITSON.

4 — turn AWRY,] Thus the quartos. The folio, "turn *away*." The same printer's error occurs in the old copy of Antony and Cleopatra, where we find—"Your crown's *away*," instead of—"Your crown's *awry*." STEEVENS.

5 — Nymph, in thy orisons, &c.] This is a touch of nature. Hamlet, at the sight of Ophelia, does not immediately recollect, that he is to personate madness, but makes her an address grave and solemn, such as the foregoing meditation excited in his thoughts. JOHNSON.

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest, and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty [5].

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with * honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness [6]; this was some time a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me: for virtue cannot so inoculate [7] our old stock, but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

* First folio, *your.*

5 That if you be honest, and fair, you should admit no discourse to your beauty.] This is the reading of all the modern editions, and is copied from the quarto. The folio reads—*your honesty* should admit no discourse to your beauty. The true reading seems to be this,—'if you be honest and fair, you should admit *your honesty* to no discourse with your beauty.' This is the sense evidently required by the process of the conversation. JOHNSON.

"That if you be honest and fair, you should admit no discourse to your beauty." The reply of Ophelia proves beyond doubt that this reading is wrong.

The reading of the folio appears to be the right one, and requires no amendment.—"Your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty," means,—"your honesty should not admit your beauty to any discourse with her;" which is the very sense that Johnson contends for, and expressed with sufficient clearness. M. MASON.

——rara est concordia formæ
Atque pudicitiæ. *Ovid.* STEEVENS.

6 —into HIS likeness;] The modern editors read—*its* likeness; but the text is right. Shakspeare and his contemporaries frequently use the personal for the neutral pronoun. So Spenser, Fairy Queen, book iii. c. ix. st. 15:

"Then forth *it* breaks; and with *his* furious blast,
"Confounds both land and seas, and skies doth overcast."

See p. 229, n. 4. MALONE.

7 —inoculate —] This is the reading of the first folio. The first quarto reads *euocutat;* the second *euacuat;* and the third, *ate.* STEEVENS.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery; Why would'st thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better, my mother had not borne me[8]: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious: with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in[9], imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in: What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven! We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us: Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him; that he may play the fool no where* but in's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry; Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery; farewell†: Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool: for wise men know well enough, what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. Heavenly powers‡, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough[1]; God hath given you one face, and you

* First folio, *way.* † First folio, *Go, farewell.*
‡ First folio, *Oh, heavenly powers.*

[8] —I could accuse me of such things, that it were better, my mother had not borne me:] So, in our poet's 88th Sonnet:

" —— I can set down a story
" Of faults conceal'd, wherein I am attainted." MALONE.

[9] —with more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts TO PUT THEM IN,] 'To put a thing into thought,' is 'to think on it.' JOHNSON.

" — at my beck." That is, *always ready to come about me.* STEEVENS.

[1] I have heard of your PAINTINGS too, well enough; &c.] This

make yourselves another [2]: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance [3]: Go to; I'll no more of't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live [4]; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit* HAMLET.

OPH. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown! The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword [5]:

is according to the quarto; the folio, for *paintings*, has *prattlings*, and for *face*, has *pace*, which agrees with what follows, *you jig, you amble*. Probably the author wrote both. I think the common reading best. JOHNSON.

I would continue to read *paintings*, because these destructive aids of beauty seem, in the time of Shakspeare, to have been general objects of satire. So, in Drayton's Mooncalf:

" —— No sooner got the teens,
" But her own natural beauty she disdains;
" With oyls and broths most venomous and base
" She plaisters over her well-favour'd face;
" And those sweet veins by nature rightly plac'd
" Wherewith she seems that white skin to have lac'd,
" She soon doth alter; and, with fading blue,
" Blanching her bosom, she makes others new." STEEVENS.

[2] — God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another:] In Guzman de Alfarache, 1623, p. 13, we have an invective against painting in which is a similar passage: " O filthinesse, above all filthinesse! O affront, above all other affronts! *that God hath given thee one face, thou shouldst abuse his image and make thyselfe another.*" REED.

[3] — make your wantonness your ignorance:] You mistake by *wanton* affectation, and pretend to mistake by *ignorance*. JOHNSON.

[4] — all but one, shall live;] By the one who shall not live, he means his step-father. MALONE.

[5] The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword:] The poet certainly meant to have placed his words thus:

" The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue, sword;"

otherwise the excellence of *tongue* is appropriated to the *soldier*, and the *scholar* wears the *sword*. WARNER.

This regulation is needless. So, in Tarquin and Lucrece:

" Princes are the *glass*, the *school*, the *book*,
" Where subjects eyes do *learn*, do *read*, do *look*."

The expectancy * and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion[6], and the mould of form[7],
The observ'd of all observers! quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject[8] and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his musick vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune[9] and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature[1] of blown youth,
Blasted with ecstasy[2]: O, woe is me!
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter King and POLONIUS.

KING. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,

* Quarto, *Th' expectation.*

And in Quintilian: "Multum agit sexus, ætas conditio; ut in *fœminis*, *senibus*, *pupillis*, *liberos*, *parentes*, *conjuges* alligantibus." FARMER.

This passage seems to be imitated in Monsieur Thomas:

"What, young Frank!
"The only tempered spirit, scholar, soldier,
"Courtier, and all in one piece." MALONE.

[6] The glass of fashion,] "Speculum consuetudinis." *Cicero.* STEEVENS.

[7] —The mould of form,] The model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves. JOHNSON.

[8] —most DEJECT—] So, in Heywood's Silver Age, 1613:

"——What knight is that
"So passionately *deject?*" STEEVENS.

[9] —out of TUNE—] Thus the folio. The quarto—out of *time.* STEEVENS.

These two words in the hand-writing of Shakspeare's age are almost indistinguishable, and hence are frequently confounded in the old copies. MALONE.

[1] —and FEATURE—] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*stature.* STEEVENS.

[2] —with ECSTASY:] The word *ecstasy* was anciently used to signify some degree of alienation of mind.

So, Gawin Douglas translating—*stetit acri fixa dolore:*

"In *ecstacy* she stood, and mad almaist." STEEVENS.

Was not like madness. There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And, I do doubt, the hatch, and the disclose[3],
Will be some danger: Which for to prevent,
I have, in quick determination,
Thus set it down; He shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart;
Whereon his brains still beating, puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well: But yet I do believe,
The origin and commencement of his * grief
Sprung from neglected love.—How now, Ophelia?
You need not tell us what lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief; let her be round with him[4];
And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference: If she find him not,

* First folio, *this.*

[3] — the DISCLOSE;] This was the technical term. So, in The Maid of Honour, by Massinger:

"One aierie with proportion ne'er *discloses*
"The eagle and the wren." MALONE.

Disclose, (says Randle Holme, in his Academy of Armory and Blazon, book ii. ch. ii. p. 238,) is when the young just peeps through the shell. It is also taken for laying, *hatching*, or bringing forth young: as "she *disclosed* three birds."

Again, in the fifth act of the play now before us:

"Ere that her golden couplets are *disclos'd*."

See my note on this passage. STEEVENS.

[4] — be ROUND with him.] To be *round* with a person, is to reprimand him with freedom. So, in A Mad World, My Masters, by Middleton, 1608: "She's *round* with her i'faith." MALONE.

See Comedy of Errors, vol. iv. p. 172. STEEVENS.

To England send him; or confine him, where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Hall in the same.

Enter Hamlet, and certain Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of our * players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion †, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear ‡ a robustious periwig-pated [5] fellow tear a

* First folio, *your*. † First folio, *the whirlwind of passion*.
‡ First folio, *see*.

[5] For in the very torrent, TEMPEST, and (as I may say) WHIRLWIND of your passion,] So, in The Puritan: "Have you never seen a stalking, stamping player, that will *raise a tempest with his tongue*, and thunder with his heels." MALONE.

[6] — PERIWIG-pated —] This is a ridicule on the quantity of false hair worn in Shakspeare's time, for wigs were not in common use till the reign of Charles II. In The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Julia says—"I'll get me such a colour'd *periwig*."

Goff, who wrote several plays in the reign of James I. and was no mean scholar, has the following lines in his Tragedy of The Courageous Turk, 1632:

"—— How now, you heavens;
"Grow you so proud you must needs put on curl'd locks,
"And clothe yourselves in *perriwigs* of fire?"

Players, however, seem to have worn them most generally. So, in Every Woman in her Humour, 1609; "—as none wear hoods

† Sir George Carew (afterwards Earl of Totnes) went a Jearning to Cambridge in 1592 (Ætat. c. 1578)

passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings [6]; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise [7]: I would have such a fellow whipped for

but monks and ladies; and feathers but fore-horses, &c.—none *perriwigs* but *players* and pictures." STEEVENS.

[6] —— the groundlings;] The meaner people then seem to have sat below, as they now sit in the upper gallery, who, not well understanding poetical language, were sometimes gratified by a mimical and mute representation of the drama, previous to the dialogue. JOHNSON.

Before each act of the tragedy of Jocasta, translated from Euripides, by George Gascoigne and Francis Kinwelmersh, the order of these dumb shows is very minutely described. This play was presented at Gray's-Inn by them, in 1566. The mute exhibitions included in it are chiefly emblematical, nor do they display a picture of one single scene which is afterwards performed on the stage. In some other pieces I have observed, that they serve to introduce such circumstances as the limits of a play would not admit to be represented.

Thus, in Herod and Antipater, 1622:

" ——— Let me now
" Intreat your worthy patience to contain
" Much in imagination; and, what words
" Cannot have time to utter, let your eyes
" Out of this DUMB SHOW tell your memories."

In short, dumb shows sometimes supplied deficiencies, and, at others, filled up the space of time which was necessary to pass while business was supposed to be transacted in foreign parts. With this method of preserving one of the unities, our ancestors appear to have been satisfied.

Ben Jonson mentions the *groundlings* with equal contempt: " The understanding gentlemen of the *ground* here."

Again, in The Case is Alter'd, 1609: " — a rude barbarous crew that have no brains, and yet *grounded* judgements; they will hiss any thing that mounts above their *grounded* capacities."

Again, in Lady Alimony, 1659: " Be your stage-curtains artificially drawn, and so covertly shrowded that the squint-eyed *groundling* may not peep in?"

In our early play-houses the pit had neither floor nor benches. Hence the term of *groundlings* for those who frequented it.

The *groundling*, in its primitive signification, means a fish which always keeps at the bottom of the water. STEEVENS.

[7] —— who, for the most part, are CAPABLE of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows, and noise:] i. e. have a *capacity* for

o'er-doing Termagant [8]; it out-herods Herod [9]: Pray you, avoid it.

nothing but dumb shows; *understand* nothing else. So, in Heywood's History of Women, 1624: "I have therein imitated our *historical* and comical poets, that write to the stage; who, lest the auditory should be dulled with serious discourses, in every act present some zany, with his mimick gesture, to breed in the less *capable* mirth and laughter." MALONE.

"—inexplicable dumb shows." I believe the meaning is, *shows, without words to explain them.* JOHNSON.

Rather, I believe, shows which are too confusedly conducted to explain themselves.

I meet with one of these in Heywood's play of The Four Prentices of London, 1615, where the Presenter says:

"I must entreat your patience to forbear
"While we do feast your eye and starve your ear.
"For in *dumb shews*, which, were they writ at large,
"Would ask a long and tedious circumstance,
"Their infant fortunes I will soon express:" &c.

Then follow the *dumb shows*, which well deserve the character Hamlet has already given of this species of entertainment, as may be seen from the following passage: "Enter Tancred, with Bella Franca richly attired, she *somewhat affecting him*, though she *makes no show of it*." Surely this may be called an *inexplicable dumb show.* STEEVENS.

[8] —Termagant;] *Termagaunt* (says Dr. Percy) is the name given in the old romances to the god of the Sarazens; in which he is constantly linked with *Mahound*, or *Mohammed*. Thus, in the legend of Syr Guy, the Soudan swears:

"So helpe me *Mahowne* of might,
"And *Termagaunt* my God so bright."

So also, in Hall's first Satire:

"Nor fright the reader with the Pagan vaunt
"Of mightie *Mahound*, and greate *Termagaunt*."

Again, in Marston's 7th Satire:

"——let whirlwinds and confusion teare
"The center of our state; let giants reare
"Hill upon hill; let westerne *Termagant*
"Shake heaven's vault," &c.

Termagant is also mentioned by Spenser in his Fairy Queen, and by Chaucer in The Tale of Sir Topas; and by Beaumont and Fletcher, in King or No King, as follows: "This would make a saint swear like a soldier, and a soldier like *Termagant*."

Again, in The Picture, by Massinger:

"——a hundred thousand Turks
"Assail'd him, every one a *Termagaunt*." STEEVENS.

1 *PLAY.* I warrant your honour.
HAM. Be not too tame neither, but let your own

Again, in Bale's Acts of English Votaries:
"Grennyng upon her, lyke *Termagauntes in a play.*"
RITSON.

9 —— out-herods HEROD:] The character of Herod in the ancient mysteries, was always a violent one.
See the Coventriæ Ludus among the Cotton MSS. Vespasian D. VIII:

"Now I regne lyk a kyng arrayd ful rych,
"Rollyd in rynggs and robys of array,
"Dukys with dentys I drive into the dych;
"My dedys be full dowty demyd be day."

Again, in The Chester Whitsun Plays, MS. Harl. 1013:

"I kynge of kynges, non soe keene,
"I sovraigne sir, as well is seene,
"I tyrant that maye bouth take and teene
"Castell, tower, and towne;
"I welde this worlde withouten wene,
"I beate all those unbuxome beene;
"I drive the devills alby dene
"Deepe in hell adowne.
"For I am kinge of all mankinde,
"I byd, I beate, I lose, I bynde,
"I master the moone; take this in mynde
"That I am most of mighte.
"I ame the greatest above degree,
"That is, that was, or ever shall be;
"The sonne it dare not shine on me,
"And I byd him goe downe.
"No raine to fall shall now be free,
"Nor no lorde have that liberty
"That dare abyde and I byd fleey,
"But I shall crake his crowne."

See the Vintner's Play, p. 67.

Chaucer, describing a parish clerk, in his Miller's Tale, says:

"He plaieth *Herode* on a skaffold high."

The parish clerks and other subordinate ecclesiasticks appear to have been our first actors, and to have represented their characters on distinct pulpits or *scaffolds*. Thus, in one of the stage-directions to the 27th pageant in the Coventry collection already mentioned: "What tyme that processyon is entered into y^t^ place, and the Herowdys taken his *schaffalde*, and Annas and Cayphas their *schaffaldys*," &c. STEEVENS.

discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'er-step not the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirrour up to nature: to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time[1], his form and pressure[2]. Now, this, over-

To the instances given by Mr. Steevens of Herod's lofty language, may be added these lines from the Coventry plays among the Cotton MSS. p. 92:

" Of bewte and of boldnes I ber evermore the belle,
" Of mayn and of myght I master every man;
" I dynge with my dowtiness the devyl down to helle,
" For bothe of hevyn and of earth I am kynge certayn."

MALONE.

Again, in the Unluckie Firmentie, by G. Kyttes, 4to. bl. l:

" But he was in such a rage
" As one that shulde on a stage
" The part of *Herode* playe." RITSON.

[1] — AGE and BODY of the TIME,] The *age* of the *time* can hardly pass. May we not read, the *face* and *body*, or did the author write, the *page*? The *page* suits well with *form* and *pressure*, but ill with *body*. JOHNSON.

To exhibit the *form and pressure* of the *age* of the *time*, is, to represent the manners of the time suitable to the period that is treated of, according as it may be ancient, or modern. STEEVENS.

I can neither think this passage right as it stands, or approve of either of the amendments suggested by Johnson.—There is one more simple than either, that will remove every difficulty. Instead of "*the very* age and body of the time," (from which it is hard to extract any meaning,) I read—"*every* age and body of the time;" and then the sense will be this:—'Show virtue her own likeness, and every stage of life, every profession or body of men, its form and resemblance.' By *every age*, is meant, the *different stages of life*;—by *every body*, the *various* fraternities, sorts, and ranks of mankind. M. MASON.

Perhaps Shakspeare did not mean to connect these words. It is the end of playing, says Hamlet, to show the age in which we live, and the body of the time, its form and pressure; to delineate exactly the manners of the age, and the particular humour of the day. MALONE.

[2] — pressure.] Resemblance, as in a *print*. JOHNSON.

done, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one * [3] must, in your allowance [4], o'er-weigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players [5], that I have seen play,—and heard others

* First folio, *the which one.*

[3] — the censure of which one,] Ben Jonson seems to have imitated this passage in his Poetaster, 1601:

" ———— I will try
" If tragedy have a more kind aspect:
" Her favours in my next I will pursue;
" Where if I prove the *pleasure but of one,*
" *If he judicious be, he shall be alone*
" *A theatre unto me.*" MALONE.

" — the censure of which one." The meaning is, 'the censure of *one of* which,' and probably that should be the reading also. The present reading, though intelligible, is very licentious, especially in prose. M. MASON.

[4] — in your ALLOWANCE,] In your approbation. See King Lear, Act II. Sc. IV. MALONE.

[5] O, there be players, &c.] I would read thus: " There be players, that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly (not to speak profanely) that neither have the accent nor the gait of Christian, Pagan, nor *Mussulman*, have so strutted and bellowed, that I thought some of nature's journeymen had made *the men*, and not made them well," &c. FARMER.

I have no doubt that our author wrote, " — that I thought some of nature's journeymen had made *them*, and not made them well," &c. *Them* and *men* are frequently confounded in the old copies. See The Comedy of Errors, Act II. Sc. II. folio, 1623: " — because it is a blessing that he bestows on beasts, and what he hath scanted *them* [r. *men*] in hair, he hath given them in wit." —In the present instance the compositor probably caught the word *men* from the last syllable of *journeymen*. Shakspeare could not mean to assert as a general truth, that nature's journeymen had made *men*, i. e. all mankind; for, if that were the case, these strutting players would have been on a footing with the rest of the species. Nature herself, the poet means to say, made all mankind except these strutting players, and they were made by Nature's *journeymen*.

A passage in King Lear, in which we meet with the same sentiment, in my opinion fully supports the emendation now proposed:

" *Kent.* *Nature* disclaims in THEE, a *tailor made* THEE.
" *Corn.* Thou art a strange fellow: A tailor make a man!

praise, and that highly,—not to speak it profanely[6], that, neither having the accent [of christians,] nor the gait of christian, pagan, nor man *, have so strutted, and bellowed, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1 *Play.* I hope, we have reformed that indifferently with us.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those, that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them[7]: for there be of them, that will

* First folio, *or Norman.*

" *Kent.* Ay, a tailor, sir; a stone-cutter or a painter [*Nature's journeymen*] could not have made *him* so ill, though he had been but two hours at the trade."

This notion of Nature keeping a shop, and employing journeymen to form mankind, was common in Shakspeare's time. See Lyly's Woman in the Moon, a comedy, 1597: " They draw the curtains from before *Nature's shop*, where stands an image clad, and some unclad." Malone.

[6] — not to speak it PROFANELY,] *Profanely* seems to relate, not to the praise which he has mentioned, but to the censure which he is about to utter. Any gross or indelicate language was called *profane*. Johnson.

So, in Othello :—" he is a most *profane* and liberal counsellor." Malone.

[7] — speak no more than is set down for them :] So, in The Antipodes, by Brome, 1638 :

" —— you, sir, are incorrigible, and
" Take licence to yourself to add unto
" Your parts, your own free fancy," &c.
" —— That is a way, my lord, has been allow'd
" On elder stages, to move mirth and laughter."
" —— Yes, in the days of Tarlton, and of Kempe,
" Before the stage was purg'd from barbarism," &c.

Stowe informs us, (p. 697, edit. 1615,) that among the twelve players who were sworn the queen's servants in 1583, " were two rare men, viz. Thomas Wilson, for a quick delicate refined *extemporall witte*; and Richard Tarleton, for a wondrous plentifull, pleasant *extemporall witt*," &c.

Again, in Tarleton's Newes from Purgatory : " — I absented myself from all plaies, as wanting that merrye Roscius of plaiers

themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous; and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.— [*Exeunt Players.*

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, *and* GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord? will the king hear this piece of work?

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste.—

[*Exit* POLONIUS.

Will you two help to hasten them?

Ros. Ay, my lord *.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ham. What, ho; Horatio!

Enter HORATIO.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man

* First folio, *Both. We will my lord.*

that famosed all comedies so with his pleasant and *extemporall invention*."

This cause for complaint, however, against low comedians, is still more ancient; for in The Contention Betwyxte Churchyard and Camell, &c. 1560, I find the following passage:

" But Vices in stage plaies,
" When theyr matter is gon,
" They laugh out the reste
" To the lookers on.
" And so wantinge matter,
" You brynge in my coate," &c. STEEVENS.

The clown very often addressed the audience, in the middle of the play, and entered into a contest of raillery and sarcasm with such of the audience as chose to engage with him. It is to this absurd practice that Shakspeare alludes. See the Historical Account of our Old English Theatres, vol. iii. MALONE.

As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord,——

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter:
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,
To feed, and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp;
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee [8],
Where thrift may follow fawning *. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul [9] was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish her election,
She hath seal'd thee for herself [1]: for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man, that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and bless'd are those,
Whose blood and judgment [2] are so well co-mingled [3],

* First folio, *faining*.

[8] — the PREGNANT hinges of the knee,] I believe the sense of *pregnant* in this place, is, *quick, ready, prompt.* JOHNSON.
See Measure for Measure, Act I. Sc. I. STEEVENS.

[9] — my DEAR soul —] Perhaps—my *clear* soul. JOHNSON.
Dear soul is an expression equivalent to the φίλα γύναῖα, φίλον ἦτορ, of Homer. STEEVENS.

[1] And could of men distinguish her election,
SHE hath seal'd thee for herself:] Thus the quarto. The folio thus:

"And could of men distinguish, her election
"*Hath* seal'd thee, &c. STEEVENS.

Mr. Ritson prefers the reading of the quarto, and observes, that to *distinguish her election*, is no more than to *make her election*. *Distinguish of men*, he adds, is exceeding harsh, to say the best of it. REED.

[2] Whose blood and judgment —] According to the doctrine of the four humours, *desire* and *confidence* were seated in the blood, and *judgment* in the phlegm, and the due mixture of the humours made a perfect character. JOHNSON.

[3] — co-mingled,] Thus the folio. The quarto reads—*co-medled*; which had formerly the same meaning. MALONE.

That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please: Give me that man
That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core [4], ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
Which I have told thee of my father's death.
I pr'ythee, when thou seest that act a-foot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe my uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen;
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy [5]. Give him heedful note:
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face;
And, after, we will both our judgments join
In censure * of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord:
If he steal aught, the whilst this play is playing,
And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

* First folio, *To censure.*

[4] — my heart's CORE,] This expression occurs also in Chapman's translation of the sixth Iliad:

"—— he wandred evermore
"Alone through his Aleian field; and fed upon the *core*
"Of his sad bosome." STEEVENS.

[5] — Vulcan's STITHY.] *Stithy* is a smith's anvil. JOHNSON.

So, in Troilus and Cressida:

"Now by the *forge* that *stithied* Mars's helm."

Again, in Greene's Card of Fancy, 1608: "determined to strike on the *stith* while the iron was hot."

Again, in Chaucer's celebrated description of the Temple of Mars, Mr. Tyrwhitt's edit. ver. 2028:

"—————— the smith
"That forgeth sharp swerdes on his *stith*." STEEVENS.

The *stith* is the *anvil;* the *stithy*, the *smith's shop*. These words are familiar to me, being in constant use at Halifax, my native place. J. EDWARDS.

Ham. They are coming to the play; I must be idle:
Get you a place.

Danish March. A Flourish. Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and Others.

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Ham. Excellent, i'faith; of the camelion's dish: I eat the air, promise-crammed: You cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now[6]. My lord,—you played once in the university, you say[7]?

[*To Polonius.*

[6] —nor mine now.—] A man's words, says the proverb, are his own no longer than he keeps them unspoken. Johnson.

[7] —you played once in the university, you say?] It should seem from the following passage in Vice Chancellor Hatcher's Letters to Lord Burghley, on June 21, 1580, that the common players were likewise occasionally admitted to perform there: "Whereas it has pleased your honour to recommend my lorde of Oxenford his players, that they might show their cunning in several plays already practised by 'em before the Queen's majesty" —— (denied on account of the pestilence and commencement:) "of late we denied the like to the Right Honourable the Lord of Leicester his servants." Farmer.

The practice of acting Latin plays in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, is very ancient, and continued to near the middle of the last century. They were performed occasionally for the entertainment of princes and other great personages; and regularly at Christmas, at which time a *Lord of misrule* was appointed at Oxford, to regulate the exhibitions, and a similar officer with the title of *Imperator* at Cambridge. The most celebrated actors at Cambridge were the students of St. John's and King's colleges: at Oxford those of Christ-Church. In the hall of that college a Latin comedy called Marcus Geminus, and the Latin tragedy of Progne, were performed before Queen Elizabeth in the year 1566; and in 1564, the Latin tragedy of Dido was

Pol. That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar [8]: I was killed i'the Capitol [9]; Brutus killed me.

played before her majesty, when she visited the university of Cambridge. The exhibition was in the body or nave of the chapel of King's college, which was lighted by the royal guards, each of whom bore a staff-torch in his hand. See Peck's Desider. Cur. p. 36, n. x. The actors of this piece were all of that college. The author of the tragedy, who in the Latin account of this royal visit, in the Museum, [MSS. Baker, 7037, p. 203,] is said to have been *Regalis Collegii olim socius*, was, I believe, John Rightwise, who was elected a fellow of King's College, in 1507, and according to Anthony Wood, "made the tragedy of Dido out of Virgil, and acted the same with the scholars of his school [St. Paul's, of which he was appointed master in 1522,] before Cardinal Wolsey with great applause." In 1583, the same play was performed at Oxford, in Christ-Church hall, before Albertus de Alasco, a Polish prince Palatine, as was William Gager's Latin comedy, entitled Rivales. On Elizabeth's second visit to Oxford, in 1592, a few years before the writing of the present play, she was entertained on the 24th and 26th of September, with the representation of the last-mentioned play, and another Latin comedy, called Bellum Grammaticale.

MALONE.

[8] I did enact JULIUS CÆSAR:] A Latin play on the subject of Cæsar's death was performed at Christ-Church in Oxford, in 1582; and several years before, a Latin play on the same subject, written by Jacques Grevin, was acted in the college of Beauvais, at Paris. I suspect that there was likewise an English play on the story of Cæsar before the time of Shakspeare. See Julius Cæsar, Preliminary Remarks, and the Essay on the Order of Shakspeare's Plays. MALONE.

[9] — I was killed i'the Capitol;] This, it is well known, was not the case; for Cæsar, we are expressly told by Plutarch, was killed in *Pompey's portico*. But our poet followed the received opinion, and probably the representation of his own time, in a play on the subject of Cæsar's death, previous to that which he wrote. The notion that Julius Cæsar was killed in the Capitol is as old as the time of Chaucer:

"This Julius to the *capitolie* wente
"Upon a day as he was wont to gon,
"And in the *capitolie* anon him hente
"This false Brutus, and his other soon,

Ham. It was a brute part of him [1], to kill so capital a calf there.—Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience [2].

Queen. Come hither, my dear * Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

Pol. O ho! do you mark that? [*To the King.*

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[*Lying down at Ophelia's Feet* [3].

Oph. No, my lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap [4]?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Do you think, I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

Oph. What is, my lord?

Ham. Nothing.

* First folio, *good.*

" And sticked him with bodekins anon
" With many a wound," &c. *The Monkes Tale.*
Tyrwhitt's edit. vol. ii. p. 31. Malone.

[1] It was a BRUTE PART of him,] Sir John Harrington in his Metamorphosis of Ajax, 1596, has the same quibble: " O brave-minded *Brutus!* but this I must truly say, they were two *brutish parts* both of him and you; one to kill his sons for treason, the other to kill his father in treason." Steevens.

[2] — they stay upon your PATIENCE.] May it not be read more intelligibly,—they stay upon your *pleasure?* In Macbeth it is:

" Noble Macbeth, we stay upon your *leisure.*" Johnson.

[3] — at Ophelia's feet.] To lie at the feet of a mistress during any dramatick representation, seems to have been a common act of gallantry. So, in The Queen of Corinth, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

" Ushers her to her couch, *lies at her feet*
" *At solemn masques*, applauding what she laughs at."

Again, in Gascoigne's Greene Knight's Farewell to Fancie:

" To *lie along in ladies lappes.*" Steevens.

[4] — I mean, &c.] This speech and Ophelia's reply to it are omitted in the quartos. Steevens.

Oph. You are merry, my lord.
Ham. Who, I?
Oph. Ay, my lord.
Ham. O! your only jig-maker[6]. What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables[7]. O heavens!

[6] —your only JIG-MAKER.] There may have been some humour in this passage, the force of which is now diminished:

" ———— many gentlemen
" Are not, as in the days of understanding,
" Now satisfied without a *jig*, which since
" They cannot with their honour, call for after
" The play, they look to be serv'd up in the middle."
Changes, or Love in a Maze, by Shirley, 1632.

In The Hog hath Lost his Pearl, 1614, one of the players comes to solicit a gentleman to *write a jig* for him. A *jig* was not in Shakspeare's time only a dance, but a ludicrous dialogue in metre, and of the lowest kind, like Hamlet's conversation with Ophelia. Many of these jigs are entered in the books of the Stationers' Company:—" Philips his *Jigg* of the Slyppers, 1595. Kempe's *Jigg* of the Kitchen-stuff Woman, 1595." STEEVENS.

The following lines in the prologue to Fletcher's Love's Pilgrimage, confirms Mr. Steevens's remark:

" ——— for approbation,
" A *jig* shall be clapp'd at, and every *rhyme*
" Prais'd and applauded by a clamorous chime."

A *jig* was not always in the form of a dialogue. Many historical ballads were formerly called *jigs*. See also, p. 308, n. 4; and the Historical Account of the English Theatres. MALONE.

Mr. Steevens has been censured for producing the quotation from Shirley, where the context shows *jig* to have meant a *dance*, for the purpose of proving that it was used for a ludicrous dialogue. This is, I think, a mistake; he quotes Shirley with another view, and then remarks what was sometimes the old signification of the word. BOSWELL.

[7] —Nay; then let the devil wear black, FOR I'll have a suit of SABLES.] The conceit of these words is not taken. They are an ironical apology for his mother's cheerful looks: two months was long enough in conscience to make any dead husband forgotten.

die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope, a great man's memory may outlive

But the editors, in their nonsensical blunder, have made Hamlet say just the contrary. That the devil and he would both go into mourning, though his mother did not. The true reading is—Nay, then let the devil wear black, *'fore* I'll have a suit of sable. *'Fore*, i. e. before. As much as to say,—Let the devil wear black for me, I'll have none. The Oxford editor despises an emendation so easy, and reads it thus,—Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of *ermine*. And you could expect no less, when such a critick had the dressing of him. But the blunder was a pleasant one. The senseless editors had wrote *sables*, the fur so called, for *sable*, black. And the critick only changed this fur for that; by a like figure, the common people say,—*You rejoice the cockles of my heart*, for *the muscles of my heart;* an unlucky mistake of one shell-fish for another.

WARBURTON.

I know not why our editors should with such implacable anger persecute their predecessors. Οἱ νεκροὶ μὴ δάκνωσιν, the dead, it is true, can make no resistance, they may be attacked with great security; but since they can neither feel nor mend, the safety of mauling them seems greater than the pleasure; nor perhaps would it much misbeseem us to remember, amidst our triumphs over the *nonsensical* and *senseless*, that we likewise are men; that *debemur morti*, and as Swift observed to Burnet, shall soon be among the dead ourselves.

I cannot find how the common reading is nonsense, nor why Hamlet, when he laid aside his dress of mourning, in a country where it was *bitter cold*, and the air *nipping and eager*, should not have a *suit of sables*. I suppose it is well enough known, that the fur of sables is not black. JOHNSON.

A *suit of sables* was the richest dress that could be worn in Denmark. STEEVENS.

Here again is an equivoque. In Massinger's Old Law, we have,—

" ——— A cunning grief,
" That's only faced with *sables* for a show,
" But gawdy-hearted." FARMER.

" — Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of SABLES." Nay then, says Hamlet, if my father be so long dead as you say, let the devil wear black; as for me, so far from wearing a mourning dress, I'll wear the most costly and magnificent suit that can be procured: *a suit trimmed with sables*.

Our poet furnished Hamlet with a suit of sables on the present occasion, not, as I conceive, because such a dress was suited to

his life half a year: But, by'r-lady, he must build churches then [8]: or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse [9]; whose epitaph is, *For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot* [1].

"a country where it was bitter cold, and the air was nipping and eager," (as Dr. Johnson supposed,) nor because "a suit of sables was the richest dress that could be worn in *Denmark*," (as Mr. Steevens has suggested,) of which probably he had no knowledge, but because a suit trimmed with sables was in Shakspeare's time the richest dress worn by men in *England*. We have had again and again occasion to observe, that, wherever his scene might happen to be, the customs of his own country were still in his thoughts.

By the statute of apparel, 24 Henry VIII. c. 13, (article *furres*,) it is ordained, that none under the degree of an *earl* may use *sables*.

Bishop says in his Blossoms, 1577, speaking of the extravagance of those times, that a *thousand ducates* were sometimes given for "a face of *sables*."

That *a suit of sables* was the magnificent dress of our author's time, appears from a passage in Ben Jonson's Discoveries: "Would you not laugh to meet *a great counsellor of state*, in a flat cap, with his trunk-hose, and a hobby-horse cloak, [See fig. 5, in the plate annexed to King Henry IV. P. I.] and yond haberdasher in a velvet gown trimm'd with *sables?*"

Florio, in his Italian Dictionary, 1598, thus explains *zibilini*: "The *rich* furre called sables."—*Sables* is the skin of the sable Martin. See also Cotgrave's French Dict. 1611: "Sebilline Martre Sebel. The sable Martin; the beast whose skinne we call *sables*." MALONE.

[8] — but—he must build churches then:] Such benefactors to society were sure to be recorded by means of the feast day on which the patron saints and founders of churches were commemorated in every parish. This custom having been long disused, the names of the builders of sacred edifices are no longer known to the vulgar, and are preserved only in antiquarian memoirs. STEEVENS.

[9] — suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse;] Amongst the country May-games there was an hobby-horse, which, when the puritanical humour of those times opposed and discredited these games, was brought by the poets and ballad-makers as an instance of the ridiculous zeal of the sectaries: from these ballads Hamlet quotes a line or two. WARBURTON.

[1] — *O, the hobby-horse is forgot.*] In Love's Labour's Lost, this line is also introduced. In a small black letter book entitled, Plays Confuted, by Stephen Gosson, I find the *hobby-horse* enu-

Trumpets sound. The dumb Show follows[2].

Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers; she, seeing him

merated in the list of dances: "For the devil (says this author) beeside the beautie of the houses, and the stages, sendeth in gearish apparell, maskes, vauting, tumbling, dauncing of gigges, galiardes, morisces, *hobbi-horses*," &c. and in Green's Tu Quoque, 1614, the same expression occurs: "The other *hobby-horse* I perceive is not forgotten."

In TEXNOΓAMIA, or The Marriage of the Arts, 1618, is the following stage-direction:

"Enter a *hobby-horse*, dancing the morrice," &c.

Again, in Beaumont and Fletcher's Women Pleased:

"*Soto*. Shall the *hobby-horse* be forgot then,
"The hopeful *hobby-horse*, shall he lie founder'd?"

The scene in which this passage is, will very amply confirm all that Dr. Warburton has said concerning the *hobby-horse*.

Again, in Ben Jonson's Entertainment for the Queen and Prince at Althorpe:

"But see *the hobby-horse* is forgot,
"Fool, it must be your lot,
"To supply his want with faces
"And some other buffoon graces."

See figure 5, in the plate at the end of The First Part of King Henry IV. with Mr. Tollet's observations on it. STEEVENS.

[2] — *The dumb show follows.*] And appears to contain every circumstance of the murder of Hamlet's father. Now there is no apparent reason why the Usurper should not be as much affected by this mute representation of his crimes, as he is afterwards when the same action is accompanied by words.

I once conceived this might have been a kind of direction to the players, which was from mistake inserted in the editions; but the subsequent conversation between Hamlet and Ophelia, entirely destroys such a notion. PYE.

I cannot reconcile myself to the exhibition in dumb show preceding the interlude, which is injudiciously introduced by the author, and should always be omitted on the stage; as we cannot well conceive why the mute representation of his crime should not affect as much the conscience of the King, as the scene that follows it. M. MASON.

asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns; finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The poisoner woos the Queen with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but, in the end, accepts his love. [Exeunt.

Oph. What means this, my lord?

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief [3].

3 Marry, this is MICHING MALLECHO; it means mischief.] To *mich* signified, originally, to *keep hid* and *out of sight*; and, as such men generally did it for the purposes of *lying in wait*, it then signified to *rob*. And in this sense Shakspeare uses the noun, a *micher*, when speaking of Prince Henry amongst a gang of robbers: "Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a *micher*? Shall the son of England prove a *thief*?" And in this sense it is used by Chaucer, in his translation of Le Roman de la Rose, where he turns the word *lierre*, (which is *larron*, *voleur*,) by *micher*. WARBURTON.

Dr. Warburton is right in his explanation of the word *miching*. So, in The Raging Turk, 1631:

"——wilt thou, envious dotard,
"Strangle my greatness in a *miching* hole?"

Again, in Stanyhurst's Virgil, 1582:

"—— wherefore thus vainely in land Lybye *mitche* you?"

The quarto reads—*munching* Mallico. STEEVENS.

"— miching mallecho." A secret and wicked contrivance; a concealed wickedness. To *mich* is a provincial word, and was probably once general; signifying to *lie hid*, or *play the truant*. In Norfolk *michers* signify *pilferers*. The signification of *miching* in the present passage may be ascertained by a passage in Decker's Wonderful Yeare, 4to. 1603: "Those that could shift for a time,—went most bitterly *miching* and muffled, up and downe, with rue and wormwood stuft into their ears and nostrills."

See also, Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598, in v. *Acciapinare*: "To *miche*, to *shrug* or *sneak in some corner*."

Where our poet met with the word *mallecho*, which in Minsheu's Spanish Dictionary, 1617, is defined *malefactum*, I am unable to ascertain. In the folio, the word is spelt *malicho*. *Mallico* [in the quarto] is printed in a distinct character, as a proper name.

Oph. Belike, this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow*: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

Oph. Will he† tell us what this show meant?

* First folio, *these fellows.* † First folio, *they.*

The word *miching* is daily used in the West of England for *playing truant,* or sculking about in private for *some sinister purpose;* and *malicho,* inaccurately written for *malheco,* signifies *mischief;* so that *miching malecho* is *mischief* on the *watch for opportunity.* When Ophelia asks Hamlet—"What means this?" she applies to him for *an explanation of what she had not seen in the show:* and not, as Dr. Warburton would have it, the *purpose* for *which the show was contrived.* Besides, *malhechor* no more signifies a *poisoner,* than a perpetrator of *any other* crime. HENLEY.

If, as Capell declares, (I know not on what authority) *Malicho* be the *Vice* of the Spanish Moralities, he should at least be distinguished by a capital. FARMER.

It is not, however, easy to be supposed that our readers discover pleasantry or even sense in "this is *miching* [or *munching*] mallico," no meaning as yet affixed to these words has entitled them to escape a further investigation. Omit them, and the text unites without their assistance:

"*Oph.* What means this, my lord?

"*Ham.* Marry, it means mischief."

Among the Shakspearian memoranda of the late Dr. Farmer, I met with the following—"At the beginning of Grim the Collier of Croydon, the Ghost of *Malbecco* is introduced as a prolocutor." Query, therefore, if the obscure words already quoted, were not originally:—"This is *mimicking Malbecco;*" a private gloss by some friend on the margin of the MS. Hamlet, and thence ignorantly received into the text of Shakspeare."

It remains to be observed, that the *mimickry* imagined by Dr. Farmer, must lie in our author's stage-directions, &c. which, like *Malbecco's* legend, convey a pointed censure on the infidelity of married women. Or, to repeat the same idea in different words—the drift of the present dumb show and succeeding dialogue, was considered by the glosser as too congenial with the well-known invective in Spenser's Fairy Queen, book iii. or the contracted copy from it in the Induction to Grim the Collier, &c. a comedy which was acted many years before it was printed. See Mr. Reed's Old Plays, vol. xi. p. 189. STEEVENS.

Ham. Ay, or any show that you'll show him: Be not you ashamed to show [4], he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught; I'll mark the play.

Pro. *For us, and for our tragedy,*
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

Enter a King and a Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart [5] gone round
Neptune's salt wash [6], and Tellus' orbed ground [7];

4 — Be not you ashamed to show, &c.] The conversation of Hamlet with Ophelia, which cannot fail to disgust every modern reader, is probably such as was peculiar to the young and fashionable of the age of Shakspeare, which was, by no means, an age of delicacy. The poet is, however, blameable; for extravagance of thought, not indecency of expression, is the characteristick of madness, at least of such madness as should be represented on the scene. Steevens.

But how is he blameable if he did not produce it as a characteristic of madness; and if it was, as Mr. Steevens has remarked, the fashionable style of conversation at that time? Boswell.

5 — cart —] A chariot was anciently so called. Thus, Chaucer, in The Knight's Tale, Mr. Tyrwhitt's edit. v. 2024:

"The *carter* overidden with his *cart*." Steevens.

Mr. Steevens's quotation from Chaucer will not prove what he produces it for. Our old poet has introduced circumstances much more lowly than that of a *carter* overridden by his *cart*; for instance:

"The coke yscalled for all his long ladell." Boswell.

6 Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash, &c.] This speech of the Player King appears to me as a burlesque of the following passage in The Comicall Historie of Alphonsus, by R. G. 1599:

"Thrise ten times Phoebus with his golden beames
"Hath compassed the circle of the skie,

And thirty dozen moons, with borrow'd sheen [8],
About the world have times twelve thirties been;
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer, and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must:
For women fear too much, even as they love [9];

" Thrise ten times Ceres hath her workemen hir'd,
" And fild her barnes with frutefull crops of corne,
" Since first in priesthood I did lead my life." Todd.

7 — orbed ground;] So, also, in our author's Lover's Complaint:

" Sometimes diverted, their poor balls are tied
" To the *orbed earth*." Steevens.

8 — sheen,] Splendor, lustre. Johnson.

9 — even as they love;] Here seems to have been a line lost, which should have rhymed to *love*. Johnson.

This line is omitted in the folio. Perhaps a triplet was designed, and then instead of *love*, we should read *lust*. The folio gives the next line thus:

" *For* women's fear and love *holds* quantity." Steevens.

Some trace of the lost line is found in the quartos, which read:

" *Either none* in neither aught," &c.

Perhaps the words omitted might have been of this import:

' Either none *they feel, or an excess approve;*
' In neither aught, or in extremity.'

In two preceding passages in the quarto, half a line was inadvertently omitted by the compositor. See p. 307, " *then senseless Ilium*, seeming," &c. and p. 328, " thus conscience does make cowards *of us all:* "—the words in Italick characters are not found in the quarto. Malone.

Mr. Malone, in his Appendix to Mr. Steevens's Shakspeare, 1778, had hastily observed, in the foregoing note, " There is, I believe, no instance of a triplet being used in our author's time;" but having discovered his mistake, expunged the remark in his own edition. Mr. Steevens, most disingenuously, restored it to its former place, in order that he might triumphantly refute, in the

And women's fear and love hold quantity;
In neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
And as my love is siz'd, my fear is so [1].
Where love is great [2], the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

P. KING. 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;
My operant powers [3] their * functions leave to do:

* First folio, *my*.

note below, an acknowledged error; and Mr. Gifford, misled by this interpolation, has animadverted upon Mr. Malone. BOSWELL.

Every critick, before he controverts the assertions of his predecessor, ought to adopt the resolution of Othello:

"I'll see, before I doubt; what I doubt, prove."

In Phaer and Twine's Virgil, 1584, the triplets are so frequent, that in two opposite pages of the tenth book, not less than *seven* are to be met with. They are likewise as unsparingly employed in Golding's Ovid, 1587. Mr. Malone, in a note on The Tempest, Act V. Sc. I. has quoted a passage from this very work, containing one instance of them. In Chapman's Homer they are also used, &c. &c. &c. In The Tempest, Act IV. Sc. I. Many other examples of them occur in Love's Labour's Lost, Act III. Sc. I. as well as in The Comedy of Errors, Act II. and III. &c. &c.—and, yet more unluckily for my opponent, the Prologue to the Mock Tragedy, now under consideration, consists of a triplet, which in our last edition stood at the top of the same page in which he supposed "no instance of a triplet being used in our author's time." STEEVENS.

[1] And as my love is SIZ'D, my fear is so.] Cleopatra expresses herself much in the same manner, with regard to her grief for the loss of Antony:

"———— our *size* of sorrow,
"*Proportion'd* to our *cause*, must be as *great*
"As *that* which makes it." THEOBALD.

[2] Where love, &c.] These two lines are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

[3] — OPERANT powers —] *Operant* is *active*. Shakspeare gives it in Timon of Athens as an epithet to *poison*. Heywood has likewise used it in his Royal King and Loyal Subject, 1637:

And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd; and, haply, one as kind
For husband shalt thou——

P. Queen. O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.

Ham. That's wormwood *.

P. Queen. The instances [4], that second marriage move,
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love;
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.

P. King. I do believe, you think what now you speak;
But, what we do determine, oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory [5];
Of violent birth, but poor validity:
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis, that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt [6]:
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy [7]:

* First folio, *wormwood, wormwood.*

" —— may my *operant* parts
" Each one forget their office!"

The word is now obsolete. STEEVENS.

4 The INSTANCES,] The *motives*. JOHNSON.

5 PURPOSE is but the SLAVE to memory;] So, in K. Henry IV. Part I.:

" But *thought's* the *slave of life*. STEEVENS.

6 — what to ourselves is debt:] The performance of a resolution, in which only the *resolver* is interested, is a debt only to himself, which he may therefore remit at pleasure. JOHNSON.

7 The violence of either grief or joy
Their own ENACTURES with themselves destroy:] What grief

Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye; nor 'tis not strange,
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;
The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend:
For who not needs, shall never lack a friend;
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy [8].
But, orderly to end where I begun,—
Our wills, and fates, do so contráry run,
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own:
So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food [9], nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me, day, and night!

or joy *enact* or determine in their violence, is revoked in their abatement. *Enactures* is the word in the quarto; all the modern editions have *enactors.* Johnson.

[8] — SEASONS him his enemy.] This quaint phrase infests almost every ancient English composition. Thus, in Chapman's translation of the fifteenth book of Homer's Odyssey:

" —— taught with so much woe
" As thou hast suffer'd, to be *season'd* true." Steevens.

[9] Nor earth TO ME GIVE food,] Thus the quarto 1604. The folio and the late editors read:

" Nor earth *to give me* food ——"

An imperative or optative verb was evidently intended here, as in the following line:

" Sport and repose *lock* from me," &c. Malone.

A very similar imprecation,—

" Day, yield me not thy light; nor night, thy rest!" &c.

occurs in King Richard III. Act IV. Sc. IV. Steevens.

To desperation [1] turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope [2]!
Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!
Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now,——

[*To Ophelia.*

P. King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here a while;
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep.

[*Sleeps.*

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;
And never come mischance between us twain!

[*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest * too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

* First folio, *protests.*

[1] To desperation, &c.] This and the following line are omitted in the folio. Steevens.

[2] An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!] May my whole liberty and enjoyment be to live on hermit's fare in a prison. *Anchor* is for *anchoret*. Johnson.

This abbreviation of the word *anchoret* is very ancient. I find it in the Romance of Robert the Devil, printed by Wynken de Worde: "We haue robbed and killed nonnes, holy *aunkers*, preestes, clerkes," &c. Again: "the foxe will be an *aunker*, for he begynneth to preche."

Again, in The Vision of Pierce Plowman:

"As *ankers* and hermits that hold them in her selles."

This and the foregoing line are not in the folio. I believe we should read—anchor's *chair*. So, in the second satire of Hall's fourth book, edit. 1602, p. 18:

"*Sit* seven yeres pining in an *anchore's cheyre*,
"To win some parched shreds of minivere." Steevens.

The old copies read—*And* anchor's cheer. The correction was made by Mr. Theobald. Malone.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in't?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i'the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The mouse-trap [3]. Marry, how? Tropically. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name [4]; his wife, Baptista [5]: you shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work: But what of that? your majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not: Let the galled jade wince [6], our withers are unwrung.—

Enter Lucianus.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king [7].

[3] The mouse-trap.] He calls it the *mouse-trap*, because it is—

" ——— the thing
" In which he'll *catch* the conscience of the king."

STEEVENS.

[4] — Gonzago is the DUKE's name;] Thus all the old copies: yet in the stage-direction for the dumb show, and the subsequent entrance, we have "Enter a *king* and queen," &c. and in the latter part of this speech both the quarto and folio read:

" —— Lucianus, nephew to the *king*."

This seeming inconsistency, however, may be reconciled. Though the interlude is the *image* of the murder of a *duke* of Vienna, or in other words founded upon that story, the poet might make the principal person of *his fable* a *king*. MALONE.

[5] — Baptista:] *Baptista* is, I think, in Italian, the name always of a man. JOHNSON.

I believe *Battista* is never used singly by the Italians, being uniformly compounded with *Giam* (for *Giovanni*,) and meaning of course, *John the Baptist*. Nothing more was therefore necessary to detect the forgery of Shebbeare's Letters on the English Nation, than his ascribing them to *Battista* Angeloni. RITSON.

[6] Let the galled jade wince,] This is a proverbial saying. So, in Damon and Pythias, 1582:

" I know the *gall'd horse* will soonest *wince*." STEEVENS.

[7] — nephew to the KING.] i. e. the king in the play then represented. The modern editors, following Mr. Theobald, read —nephew to the *duke*,—though they have not followed that editor

Oph. You are as good as a chorus †, my lord [8].

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying [9].

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning, to take off my edge.

Oph. Still better, and worse [1].

Ham. So you mistake your husbands [2].—Begin,

* First folio, *you are a good chorus*.

in substituting *duke and duchess* for *king and queen*, in the dumb show and subsequent entrance. There is no need of departing from the old copies. See n. 4, in the preceding page. MALONE.

[8] You are as good as a CHORUS, &c.] The use to which Shakspeare converted the *chorus*, may be seen in King Henry V. HENLEY.

[9] *Ham.* I could interpret, &c.] This refers to the interpreter, who formerly sat on the stage at all *motions* or *puppet-shows*, and interpreted to the audience.

So, in The Two Gentlemen of Verona:

"O excellent *motion!* O exceeding *puppet!*
"Now will he *interpret* for her."

Again, in Greene's Groatsworth of Wit, 1621: "— It was I that penned the moral of Man's wit, the dialogue of Dives, and for seven years' space was absolute *interpreter of the puppets*." STEEVENS.

[1] Still better, and worse.] i. e. better in regard to the wit of your *double entendre*, but worse in respect to the grossness of your meaning. STEEVENS.

[2] So you MISTAKE your husbands.] Read—"So you *must take* your husbands;" that is, *for better, for worse*. JOHNSON.

Mr. Theobald proposed the same reading in his Shakspeare Restored, however he lost it afterwards. STEEVENS.

"So you mistake your husbands." I believe this to be right: the word is sometimes used in this ludicrous manner: "Your true trick, rascal, (says Ursula, in Bartholomew Fair,) must be to be ever busie, and *mistake* away the bottles and cans, before they be half drunk off." FARMER.

Again, in Ben Jonson's Masque of Augurs: "— To *mistake* six torches from the chandry, and give them one."

Again, in The Elder Brother of Fletcher:

"I fear he will persuade me to *mistake* him."

Again, in Chrestoleros; Seven Bookes of Epigrams written by T. B. [Thomas Bastard] 1598, lib. vii. epig. xviii.:

"Caius hath brought from forraine landes
"A sootie wench, with many handes,

murderer ;—leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come ;——

——The croaking raven
Doth bellow for revenge.

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds [3] collected,
With Hecat's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magick and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp * immediately.

[*Pours the Poison into the Sleeper's Ears.*

Ham. He poisons him i'the garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and written in very choice † Italian: You shall see anon, how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What! frighted with false fire [4]!

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light:—away!

* Quarto, *usurps.* † First folio, *writ in choice.*

"Which doe in goolden letters say
"She is his *wife*, not stolne away.
"He mought have sav'de, with small discretion,
"Paper, inke, and all confession:
"For none that see'th her face and making,
"Will judge her stolne, but by *mistaking*."

Again, in Questions of Profitable and Pleasant Concernings, &c. 1594: "Better I were now and then to suffer his remisse mother to *mistake* a quarter or two of corne, to buy the knave a coat with," &c. STEEVENS.

I believe the meaning is—you do amiss for yourselves to take husbands for the worse. You should take them only for the better. TOLLET.

[3] — MIDNIGHT weeds —] The force of the epithet—*midnight*, will be best displayed by a corresponding passage in Macbeth:

"Root of hemlock, *digg'd i'the dark*." STEEVENS.

[4] What! frighted with false fire!] This speech is omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

Pol. Lights, lights, lights [5]!

[*Exeunt all but* HAMLET *and* HORATIO.

Ham. Why, let the strucken deer go weep [6],
The hart ungalled play:
For some must watch, while some must sleep;
Thus runs the world away.—
Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers [7], (if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me [8],) with two Provincial roses on my razed shoes [9], get me a fellowship in a cry of players [1], sir?

[5] Lights, lights, lights!] The quartos give this speech to Polonius. STEEVENS.

In the folio *All* is prefixed to this speech. MALONE.

[6] — strucken deer go weep,] See As You Like It, vol. vi. p. 382, n. 8. STEEVENS.

[7] Would not this, sir, and a forest of FEATHERS, &c.] It appears from Decker's Gul's Hornbooke, that feathers were much worn on the stage in Shakspeare's time. MALONE.

I believe, since the English stage began, feathers were worn by every company of players that could afford to purchase them. STEEVENS.

[8] — TURN TURK with me,] This expression has occurred already in Much Ado About Nothing, and I have met with it in several old comedies. So, in Greene's Tu Quoque, 1614: "This it is to *turn Turk*, from an absolute and most compleat gentleman, to a most absurd, ridiculous, and fond lover." It means, I believe, no more than to change condition fantastically. Again, in Decker's Honest Whore, 1635:

"——'tis damnation,
"If you *turn Turk* again."

Perhaps the phrase had its rise from some popular story like that of Ward and Dansiker, the two famous pirates; an account of whose overthrow was published by A. Barker, 1609: and, in 1612, a play was written on the same subject call'd A Christian turn'd Turk. STEEVENS.

[9] — PROVINCIAL roses on my RAZED shoes,] Why *provincial* roses? Undoubtedly we should read—*Provencial*, or with the French ç) *Provençal*. He means roses of *Provence*, a beautiful species of rose, and formerly much cultivated. T. WARTON.

They are still more cultivated than any other flower of the same tribe. STEEVENS.

The old copies read *provincial*, which led Mr. Warton to ask, "Why *provincial* roses?" and to conclude that roses of *Provence* were meant, on which conclusion the text has been *most unneces-*

Hor. Half a share.
Ham. A whole one, I[2].

sarily changed: because the old reading was certainly correct. There is no evidence to show that *Provence* was ever remarkable for its roses; but it is well known that *Provins*, in La Basse Brie, about forty miles from Paris, was formerly very celebrated for the growth of this flower, of which the best cataplasms are said to have been made. It was, according to tradition, imported into that country from Syria, by a count De Brie. See Guillemeau Histoire Naturelle de la Rose. It is probable that this kind of rose, which in our old herbals is called the Great Holland or *Province* rose, was imported into this country both from Holland and France, from which latter country the Dutch might have first procured it. There is an elegant cut of the Provins rose, with a good account of it, in the first edition of Pomet Hist. des Drogues, 1694, folio, p. 174. Douce.

When shoe-strings were worn, they were covered, where they met in the middle, by a ribband, gathered in the form of a rose. So, in an old song:

"Gil-de Roy was a bonny boy,
"Had *roses* tull his *shoon*." Johnson.

These *roses* are often mentioned by our ancient dramatick writers.

So, in The Devil's Law-case, 1623:

"With overblown *roses* to hide your gouty ancles."

Again, in The Roaring Girl, 1611: "—many handsome legs in silk stockings have villainous splay-feet, for all their great *roses*."

The reading of the quartos is *raz'd shoes*; that of the folio *rac'd shoes*. *Razed* shoes may mean *slashed* shoes, i. e. with cuts or openings in them. The poet might have written *raised shoes*, i. e. shoes with *high heels*; such as by adding to the stature, are supposed to increase the dignity of a player. In Stubbs's Anatomie of Abuses, 1595, there is a chapter on the *corked shoes* in England, "which, (he says) beare them up two inches or more from the ground, &c. some of red, blacke, &c. *razed*, carved, cut, and stitched," &c.

Again, in Warner's Albion's England, 1602, b. ix. ch. xlvii.:

"Then wore they shoes of ease, now of an inch-broad, *corked high*."

Mr. Pope reads—*rayed* shoes, i. e. (as interpreted by Dr. Johnson) "shoes *braided in lines*." Stowe's Chronicle, anno 1353, mentions women's hoods *reyed* or striped. *Raie* is the French word for a stripe. Johnson's Collection of Ecclesiastical Laws informs us, under the years 1222 and 1353, that in disobe-

For thou dost know, O Damon dear[3],
This realm dismantled was

dience of the canon, the clergy's shoes were *checquered* with red and green, exceeding long, and variously pinked.

The reading of the quartos may likewise receive additional support. Bulwer, in his Artificial Changeling, speaks of gallants who pink and *raze* their satten, damask, and Duretto skins. To *raze* and to *race*, alike signify *to streak*. See Minsheu's Dict. in v. To *rase*. The word, though differently spelt, is used in nearly the same signification in Markham's Country Farm, p. 585: "—baking all (i. e. wafer cakes) together between two irons, having within them many *raced* and checkered draughts after the manner of small squares." STEEVENS.

[1] — a cry of players,] Allusion to a pack of hounds. WARBURTON.

A *pack* of hounds was once called a *cry* of hounds. So, in The Two Noble Kinsmen, by Shakspeare and Fletcher:

"———— and well have halloo'd
"To a deep *cry* of hounds."

Again, in A Midsummer Night's Dream:

"———— a *cry* more tuneable
"Was never halloo'd to, or cheer'd with horn."

Milton, likewise, has—"A *cry* of hell-hounds." STEEVENS.

"—a CRY of players." A troop or company of players. So, in Coriolanus:

"—— You have made good work,
"You and your *cry*."

Again, in a Strange Horse-race, by Thomas Decker, 1613: "The last race they ran, (for you must know they ran many,) was from a *cry* of serjeants." MALONE.

[2] *Hor.* Half a SHARE.

Ham. A whole one, I.] It should be, I think,—

"A whole one;—*ay*,—
"For," &c.

The actors in our author's time had not annual salaries as at present. The whole receipts of each theatre were divided into shares, of which the proprietors of the theatre, or *house-keepers*, as they were called, had some; and each actor had one or more shares, or part of a share, according to his merit. See The Account of the Ancient Theatres, vol. iii. MALONE.

"A whole one, I," in familiar language, means no more than—I think myself entitled to a whole one. STEEVENS.

[3] — O DAMON dear,] Hamlet calls Horatio by this name, in allusion to the celebrated friendship between Damon and Pythias. A play on this subject was written by Richard Edwards, and published in 1582. STEEVENS.

Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very—peacock [4].

The friendship of Damion and Pythias is also enlarged upon in a book that was probably very popular in Shakspeare's youth, Sir Thomas Eliot's Governour, 1553.

It is proverbially used in Tamburlaine, Part I.:

"——Full true thou speak'st,
"Whom I may term a Damon for thy love!" MALONE.

[4] A very, very—PEACOCK.] This alludes to a fable of the birds choosing a king; instead of the eagle, a peacock. POPE.

The old copies have it *paiock*, *paicocke*, and *pajocke*. I substitute *paddock*, as nearest to the traces of the corrupted reading. I have, as Mr. Pope says, been willing to substitute any thing in the place of his peacock. He thinks a fable alluded to, of the birds choosing a king; instead of the *eagle*, a *peacock*. I suppose, he must mean the fable of Barlandus, in which it is said, the birds, being weary of their state of anarchy, moved for the setting up of a king; and the *peacock* was elected on account of his gay feathers. But, with submission, in this passage of our Shakspeare, there is not the least mention made of the *eagle* in antithesis to the *peacock*; and it must be by a very uncommon figure, that Jove himself stands in the place of his *bird*. I think, Hamlet is setting his father's and uncle's characters in contrast to each other: and means to say, that by his father's death the state was stripped of a godlike monarch, and that now in his stead reigned the most despicable poisonous animal that could be; a mere *paddock* or *toad*. *PAD*, *bufo*, *rubeta major*; a toad. This word I take to be of Hamlet's own substituting. The verses, repeated, seem to be from some old ballad; in which, rhyme being necessary, I doubt not but the last verse ran thus:

"A very, very——*ass*." THEOBALD.

A *peacock* seems proverbial for a *fool*. Thus Gascoigne, in his Weeds:

"A theefe, a cowarde, and a *peacocke foole*." FARMER.

In the last scene of this Act, Hamlet, speaking of the King, uses the expression which Theobald would introduce:

"Would from a *paddock*, from a bat, a gib,
"Such dear concernments hide?"

The reading, *peacock*, which I believe to be the true one, was first introduced by Mr. Pope.

Mr. Theobald is unfaithful in his account of the old copies. No copy of authority reads—*paicocke*. The quarto 1604, has *paiock*: the folio 1623, *paiocke*.

Skakspeare, I suppose, means, that the King struts about with a false pomp, to which he has no right. See Florio's Italian

Hor. You might have rhymed.

Ham. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning,——

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha!—Come, some musick; come, the recorders.—

For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike [5],—he likes it not, perdy [6].—

Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Come, some musick.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir,——

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is, in his retirement, marvellous distempered.

Ham. With drink, sir [7]?

Guil. No, my lord, with choler *.

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more

* First folio, *rather with choler*.

Dictionary, 1568: "*Pavonnegiare.* To jet up and down, fondly gazing upon himself, as a peacock doth." Malone.

The old readings are so corrupt that they leave conjecture more at liberty than ought generally to be the case. For Mr. Pope's emendation, *peacock*, perhaps we might better read *puttock*, a mean, degenerate hawk. Our author contrasts it with the eagle in Cymbeline, Act I. Sc. II.: "I chose an *eagle*, and did avoid a *puttock*." Blakeway.

5 Why then, belike,] Hamlet was going on to draw the consequence, when the courtiers entered. Johnson.

6 — he likes it not, perdy.] *Perdy* is the corruption of *par Dieu*, and is not uncommon in the old plays. So, in The Play of the Four P's, 1569:

"In that, you Palmer, as deputie,
"May clearly discharge him, *pardie*." Steevens.

7 With drink, sir?] Hamlet takes particular care that his uncle's love of drink shall not be forgotten. Johnson.

richer, to signify this to the doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation, would, perhaps, plunge him into more * choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir:—pronounce.

Guil. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon, and my return, shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: But, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: My mother, you say,——

Ros. Then thus she says; Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother!—But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? impart †.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade [8] with us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

* First folio, *far more*.

† First folio omits *impart*.

[8] —further TRADE —] Further *business*; further *dealing*. JOHNSON.

So Nicholas Grimald, in his translation of Cicero de Officiis, 1555, describes that work as "a matter containing the whole *trade* how to live among men discreetly and honestly." BOSWELL.

Ham. And do still, by these pickers and stealers [9].

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, but bar the door upon * your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark [1]?

Ham. Ay, sir, but, *While the grass grows*,—the proverb is something musty [2].

Enter the Players, with Recorders [3].

O, the recorders:—let me see one.—To withdraw

* First folio, *freely bar the door of.*

9 —by these PICKERS, &c.] By these *hands*. JOHNSON.

"By these hands," says Dr. Johnson, and rightly. But the phrase is taken from our church catechism, where the catechumen, in his duty to his neighbour, is taught to keep his hands from *picking and stealing*. WHALLEY.

1 —when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?] See p. 199, n, 1. MALONE.

2 Ay, sir, but, WHILE THE GRASS GROWS,—the proverb is something musty.] The remainder of this old proverb is preserved in Whetstone's Promos and Cassandra, 1578:

"*Whylst grass doth growe*, oft sterves the seely steede."

Again, in The Paradise of Daintie Devises, 1578:

"To whom of old this proverbe well it serves,

"*While grass doth growe*, the silly horse he starves."

Hamlet means to intimate, that whilst he is waiting for the succession to the throne of Denmark, he may himself be taken off by death. MALONE.

3 —*Recorders.*] i. e. a kind of large flute. See vol. v. p. 317, n. 3.

To *record* anciently signified to *sing* or *modulate*. STEEVENS.

Sir J. Hawkins, in vol. iv. p. 479, of his valuable History of Musick, has offered very good proofs that the recorder was a *flagelet*, and he maintains that the flute was improperly termed a recorder, and that the expressions have been confounded: yet his opinion that the books of instructions entitled 'for the recorder' belong in reality to the flute, seems rather doubtful. The confusion is in having blended the genus with the species.

with you[4]:—Why do you go about to recover the wind of me[5], as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly[6].

In the Promptuarium Parvulorum, 1516, 4to. a recorder is defined to be a "lytell pype." In Udall's Flowres for Latine Spekyng selected oute of Terence, 1532, 12mo. the line from Virgil's Bucolics,

Nec te pœniteat *calamo* trivisse labellum,

is rendered, "and thynke it not a smalle thynge to have lerned to playe on the *pype* or the *recorder:*" and it is not a little curious that in modern cant language the recorders of corporations are termed *flutes*. The following story in Wits Fits and Fancies, 1595, 4to. shows that the pipe and recorder were different; such is the uncertainty of definition among old writers: "A merrie recorder of London mistaking the name of one *Pepper*, call'd him *Piper:* whereunto the partie excepting, and saying: Sir, you mistake, my name is *Pepper*, not *Piper;* hee answered: Why, what difference is there (I pray thee) between *Piper* in Latin, and *Pepper* in English; is it not all one? No, sir (reply'd the other) there is even as much difference betweene them, as is between a *pipe* and a *recorder*." Douce.

[4] To withdraw with you:] These last words have no meaning, as they stand: yet none of the editors have attempted to amend them. They were probably spoken to the Players, whom Hamlet wished to get rid of:—I therefore should suppose that we ought to read, "So, withdraw you;" or, "So withdraw, will you?"

M. Mason.

Here Mr. Malone added the following stage direction:—[*Taking Guildenstern aside.*] But the foregoing obscure words may refer to some gesture which Guildenstern had used, and which, at first, was interpreted by Hamlet into a signal for him to attend the speaker into another room. "To withdraw with you?" (says he) Is that your meaning? But finding his friends continue to move mysteriously about him, he adds, with some resentment, a question more easily intelligible. Steevens.

[5] — recover the wind of me,] So, in an ancient MS. play entitled The Second Maiden's Tragedy:

"——— Is that next?

"Why, then I have your ladyship *in the wind*." Steevens.

Again, in Churchyard's Worthiness of Wales:

"Their cunning can with craft so cloke a troeth,
"That hardly we shall *have them in the winde*,
"To smell them forth or yet their fineness finde."

Henderson.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages[7] with your finger and thumb[8], give it breath

[6] O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.] i. e. if my duty to the *king* makes me press you a little, my love to *you* makes me still more importunate. If that makes me *bold*, this makes me even *unmannerly*. WARBURTON.

I believe we should read—my love is *not* unmannerly. My conception of this passage is, that, in consequence of Hamlet's moving to take the recorder, Guildenstern also shifts his ground, in order to place himself *beneath* the prince in his new position. This, Hamlet ludicrously calls "*going about to recover the wind.*" &c. and Guildenstern may answer properly enough, I think, and like a courtier: "*if my duty* to the king makes me *too bold* in pressing you upon a disagreeable subject, *my love* to you will make me not *unmannerly*, in showing you all possible marks of respect and attention." TYRWHITT.

[7] — ventages —] The holes of a flute. JOHNSON.

[8] — and thumb,] The first quarto reads—"with your fingers and the *umber*." This may probably be the ancient name for that piece of moveable brass at the end of a flute which is either raised or depressed by the finger. The word *umber* is used by Stowe the chronicler, who, describing a single combat between two knights, says—"he brast up his *umber* three times." Here the *umber* means the *visor of the helmet*. So, in Spenser's Fairy Queene, b. iii. c. i. st. 42:

"But the brave maid would not disarmed be,
"But only vented up her *umbriere*,
"And so did let her goodly visage to appere."

Again, book iv. c. iv.:

"And therewith smote him on his *umbriere*."

Again, in the second book of Lidgate on the Trojan War, 1513:

"Thorough the *umber* into Troylus' face." STEEVENS.

If a *recorder* had a brass key like the *German flute*, we are to follow the reading of the quarto; for then the *thumb* is not concerned in the government of the ventages or stops. If a *recorder* was like a *tabourer's pipe*, which has no brass key, but has a stop for the thumb, we are to read—'Govern these ventages with

with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent * musick. Look you, these are the stops [9].

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me? You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery: you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much musick, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood †, do you think, I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.

Enter Polonius.

God bless you, sir!

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks, it is like a weasel [1].

* First folio, *excellent*. † First folio, *Why*.

your finger and thumb.' In Cotgrave's Dictionary, *ombre*, *ombraire*, *ombriere*, and *ombrelle*, are all from the Latin *umbra*, and signify a *shadow*, an *umbrella*, or any thing that shades or hides the face from the sun; and hence they may have been applied to any thing that hides or covers another; as for example, they may have been applied to the brass key that covers the hole in the German flute. So, Spenser used *umbriere* for the visor of the helmet, as Rous's History of the Kings of England uses *umbrella* in the same sense. Tollet.

9 — the stops.] The sounds formed by occasionally stopping the holes, while the instrument is played upon. So, in the Prologue to King Henry V.:

"Rumour is a *pipe* —

"And of so easy and so plain a *stop*," &c. Malone.

1 Methinks, &c.] This passage has been printed in modern editions thus:

Pol. It is backed like a weasel.

Ham. Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by and by.—They fool me to the top of my bent[2].—I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so. [*Exit Polonius.*

Ham. By and by is easily said.—Leave me, friends. [*Exeunt Ros. Guil. Hor. &c.*

'Tis now the very witching time of night;
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out

" *Ham.* Methinks, it is like an *ouzle.*

" *Pol.* It is *black* like an *ouzle.*"

The first folio reads,—" It is like a *weazel.*"

" *Pol.* It is *back'd* like a *weazel*—:" and what occasion for alteration there was, I cannot discover. The *weaezl* is remarkable for the length of its *back;* but though I believe a *black weasel* is not easy to be found, yet it is as likely that the cloud should resemble a *weasel* in shape, as an *ouzle* (i. e. black-bird) in colour.

Mr. Tollet observes, that we might read—" it is *beck'd* like a *weasel,*" i. e. weasel-snouted. So, in Holinshed's Description of England, p. 172: " if he be *wesell-becked.*" Quarles uses this term of reproach in his Virgin Widow: " Go you *weazel-snouted,* addle-pated," &c. Mr. Tollet adds, that Milton, in his Lycidas, calls a promontory *beaked,* i. e. prominent like the *beak* of a bird, or a ship. Steevens.

" *Ham.* Methinks it is like a weazel.

" *Pol.* It is *backed* like a weazel." Thus the quarto 1604, and the folio. In a more modern quarto, that of 1611, *backed,* the original reading, was corrupted into *black.*

Perhaps, in the original edition, the words *camel* and *weasel* were shuffled out of their places. The poet might have intended the dialogue to proceed thus:

" *Ham.* Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in the shape of a *weasel?*

" *Pol.* By the mass, and 'tis like a weasel, indeed.

" *Ham.* Methinks, it is like a *camel.*

" *Pol.* It is *backed* like a *camel.*"

The protuberant back of a camel seems more to resemble a cloud, than the back of a weasel does. Malone.

[2] They fool me to the top of my bent.] They compel me to play the fool, till I can endure it no longer. Johnson.

Perhaps a term in archery; i. e. as far as the bow will admit of being bent without breaking. Douce.

Contagion to this world: Now could I drink hot blood,
And do such business as the bitter day [3]
Would quake to look on. Soft; now to my mother.—
O, heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:
Let me be cruel, not unnatural:
I will speak daggers to her [4], but use none;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:
How in my words soever she be shent [5],
To give them seals [6] never, my soul, consent!
[*Exit.*

[3] And do such business as the BITTER DAY —] Thus the quarto. The folio reads:

"And do such *bitter business* as the day," &c. MALONE.

The expression *bitter business* is still in use, and though at present a vulgar phrase, might not have been such in the age of Shakspeare. The *bitter day* is the day rendered hateful or *bitter* by the commission of some act of mischief.

Watts, in his Logick, says, "*Bitter* is an equivocal word; there is *bitter* wormwood, there are *bitter* words, there are *bitter* enemies, and a *bitter* cold morning." It is, in short, any thing unpleasing or hurtful. STEEVENS.

[4] I will speak DAGGERS to her,] A similar expression occurs in The Return from Parnassus, 1606: "They are pestilent fellows, they speak nothing but *bodkins*." It has been already observed, that a *bodkin* anciently signified a *short dagger*.

It may, however, be observed, that in the Aululария of Plautus, Act II. Sc. I. a phrase not less singular occurs:

ME. Quia mitri misero cerebrum excutiunt
Tua dicta, soror: *lapides loqueris*. STEEVENS.

[5] — be SHENT,] To *shend*, is to *reprove harshly*, to *treat with rough language*. So, in The Coxcomb of Beaumont and Fletcher:

"—— We shall be *shent* soundly." STEEVENS.

Shent seems to mean something more than reproof, by the following passage from The Mirror for Magistrates: Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, is the speaker, and he relates his having betrayed the Duke of Gloucester and his confederates to the King, "for which (says he) they were all tane and *shent*."

Hamlet surely means, "however my mother may be *hurt*, *wounded*, or *punish'd*, by my *words*, let me never consent," &c.
HENDERSON.

SCENE III.

A Room in the Same.

Enter King, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe with us,
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith despatch,
And he to England shall along with you [7]:
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so near us *, as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies [8].

* First folio, *dangerous*.

[6] To give them seals —] i. e. put them in execution. Warburton.

[7] I like him not; nor stands it safe with us,
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith despatch,
And he to England shall along with you:] In the Hystory of Hamblett, bl. l. the King does not adopt this scheme of sending Hamlet to England till after the death of Polonius; and though he is described as doubtful whether Polonius was slain by Hamlet, his apprehension lest he might himself meet the same fate as the old courtier, is assigned as the motive for his wishing the Prince out of the kingdom. This at first inclined me to think that this short scene, either from the negligence of the copyist or the printer, might have been misplaced; but it is certainly printed as the author intended, for in the next scene Hamlet says to his mother, "I must to England; you know that," before the King could have heard of the death of Polonius. Malone.

[8] Out of his LUNACIES.] I have ventured to restore the reading of the first folio, which affords a meaning about which no one can hesitate, and which the King has employed before:

"Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
"With turbulent and dangerous *lunacy*."

instead of *lunes*, which Mr. Theobald has introduced merely with a view to avoid an Alexandrine. As Mr. Steevens justly observed in his edition of 1778, "from the redundancy of the measure nothing can be inferred:" and we have already had a multitude of lines equally long in this very play. The word *brows* in the quarto, which was probably changed for one more obviously to be

GUIL. We will ourselves provide:
Most holy and religious fear it is,

understood, need not to have been amended, as Johnson proposed: The *brow* seems to have been considered by Shakspeare as the great seat of expression, from which either our virtue or "the *head and front* of our offending" might be discovered:

"—— Takes off the rose
"From the *fair forehead* of an innocent love."

So again:

"——— Brands the harlot
"Even here between the chaste unsmirched *brow*
"Of my true mother." BOSWELL.

"Out of his *lunes*." The folio reads—Out of his *lunacies*. The old quartos:

"Out of his *brows*."

This was from the ignorance of the first editors; as is this unnecessary Alexandrine, which we owe to the players. The poet, I am persuaded, wrote:

"—— as doth hourly grow
"Out of his *lunes*."

i. e. his *madness*, *frenzy*. THEOBALD.

I take *brows* to be, properly read, *frows*, which, I think, is a provincial word for *perverse humours*; which being, I suppose, not understood, was changed to *lunacies*. But of this I am not confident. JOHNSON.

I would receive Theobald's emendation, because Shakspeare uses the word *lunes* in the same sense in The Merry Wives of Windsor, and The Winter's Tale.

I have met, however, with an instance in support of Dr. Johnson's conjecture:

"—— were you but as favourable as you are *frowish*—."
Tully's Love, by Greene, 1616.

Froes is also used by Chapman, in his version of the sixth Iliad, for *furious* women:

"———— ungodly fears
"He put the *froes* in, seiz'd their god—."

Perhaps, however, Shakspeare designed a metaphor from horned cattle, whose powers of being dangerous increase with the *growth of their brows*. STEEVENS.

The two readings of *brows* and *lunes*—when taken in connection with the passages referred to by Mr. Steevens, in The Winter's Tale, and The Merry Wives of Windsor, plainly figure forth the image under which the King apprehended danger from Hamlet:—viz. that of a bull, which, in his frenzy, might not only gore, but push him from his throne.—"The hazard that hourly grows out of his *brows*" (according to the quartos) corresponds to "the *shoots*

To keep those many many bodies safe,
That live, and feed, upon your majesty.
Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from 'noyance; but much more
That spirit, upon whose weal [9] depend and rest
The lives of many. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw
What's near it, with it: it is a massy wheel [1],
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortis'd and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boist'rous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.
King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;

from the *rough pash*," [that is, the *tufted protuberance* on the head of a bull, from whence his horns spring,] alluded to in The Winter's Tale; whilst the imputation of impending danger to "his *lunes*" (according to the other reading) answers as obviously to the jealous fury of the husband that thinks he has detected the infidelity of his wife. Thus, in The Merry Wives of Windsor: "Why, woman, your husband is in his old *lunes*—he so takes on yonder with my husband; so rails against all married mankind; so curses all Eve's daughters, and so buffets himself on the *forehead*, crying peer out! peer out! that any *madness*, I ever yet beheld, seem'd but tameness, civility, and patience, to this distemper he is now in." HENLEY.

Shakspeare probably had here the following passage in The Hystory of Hamblet, bl. l. in his thoughts: "*Fengon* could not content himselfe, but still his minde gave him that the *foole* [Hamlet] would play him *some trick of legerdemaine*. And in that conceit seeking to be rid of him, determined to find the meanes to do it, by the aid of a stranger; making the king of England minister of his massacrous resolution, to whom he purposed to send him." MALONE.

[9] That spirit, upon whose WEAL —] So the quarto. The folio gives—

"That spirit, upon whose *spirit* —." STEEVENS.

[1] — it is a massy wheel,] Thus the folio. The quarto reads—*Or* it is, &c. MALONE.

For we will fetters put upon * this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Ros. Guil. We will haste us.

[*Exeunt* Rosencrantz *and* Guildenstern.

Enter Polonius.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet:
Behind the arras I'll convey myself [2],
To hear the process; I'll warrant, she'll tax him home:
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet, that some more audience, than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial [3], should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage [4]. Fare you well, my liege:
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord.

[*Exit* Polonius.

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder!—Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will [5];

* Quarto, *about*.

[2] Behind the arras I'll convey myself,] The arras-hangings, in Shakspeare's time, were hung at such a distance from the walls, that a person might easily stand behind them unperceived. Malone.

See Henry IV. P. I. Act II. Sc. IV. Steevens.

[3] Since nature makes them partial, &c.]

——————— Matres omnes filiis
In peccato adjutrices, auxilii in paterna injuria
Solent esse ——. *Ter. Heaut.* Act V. Sc. II.

Steevens.

[4] — of VANTAGE.] By some opportunity of secret observation. Warburton.

[5] Though inclination be as sharp as WILL;] Dr. Warburton would read:

"Though inclination be as sharp as *th' ill.*"

The old reading is—as sharp *as will*. Steevens.

My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood?
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens,
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy,
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer, but this two-fold force,—
To be forestalled, ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd *, being down? Then I'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder!—
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardon'd, and retain the offence [6]?

* Quarto, *pardon*.

I have followed the easier emendation of Mr. Theobald, received by Sir T. Hanmer: i. e. as *'twill*. JOHNSON.

Will is *command*, *direction*. Thus, Ecclesiasticus, xliii. 16: "— and at his *will* the south wind bloweth." The King says, his mind is in too great confusion to pray, even though his *inclination* were as strong as the *command* which requires that duty. STEEVENS.

What the King means to say, is, "That though he was not only *willing* to pray, but strongly *inclined* to it, yet his intention was defeated by his guilt."

The distinction I have stated between *inclination* and *will*, is supported by the following passage in the Laws of Candy, where Philander says to Erato:

"I have a *will*, I'm sure, howe'er my heart
"May play the coward." M. MASON.

The distinction is philosophically correct. I may *will* to do a thing because my understanding points it out to me as right, although I am not *inclined* to it. See Locke on the Human Understanding, b. 2, ch. 21, sec. 30. BOSWELL.

[6] May one be pardon'd, and retain the OFFENCE?] He that does not amend what can be amended, *retains* his *offence*. The King kept the crown from the right heir. JOHNSON.

A similar passage occurs in Philaster, where the King, who had

In the corrupted currents of this world,
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: But 'tis not so above:
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can: What can it not?
Yet what can it, when one can not repent[7]?
O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
O limed soul[8]; that struggling to be free,
Art more engag'd! Help, angels, make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees! and, heart, with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe;
All may be well! [*Retires and kneels.*

Enter HAMLET.

HAM. Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying[9];
And now I'll do't;—and so he goes to heaven:
And so am I reveng'd? That would be scann'd[1]:

usurped the crown of Sicily, and is praying to heaven for forgiveness, says:

"——— But how can I
"Look to be heard of gods, that must be just,
"Praying upon the ground I hold by wrong?"

M. MASON.

7 Yet what can it, when one CAN NOT repent?] What can *repentance* do for a man that cannot be *penitent*, for a man who has only part of penitence, distress of conscience, without the other part, resolution of amendment? JOHNSON.

8 O LIMED soul;] This alludes to *bird-lime*. Shakspeare uses the same word again, in King Henry VI. P. II.:

"Madam, myself have *lim'd* a bush for her." STEEVENS.

9 — PAT, now he is praying;] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*but* now, &c. STEEVENS.

1 —That would be scann'd:] i. e. that should be considered, estimated. STEEVENS.

A villain kills my father; and, for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send [2]
To heaven.
Why, this is hire and salary [3], not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown [4], as flush * as
May;
And, how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven [5]?
But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him: And am I then reveng'd,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No.
Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent [6]:
When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;
Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed [7];

* First folio, *fresh*.

[2] I, his SOLE son, do this same villain send—] The folio reads—*foule* son, a reading apparently corrupted from the quarto. The meaning is plain. 'I, his *only* son, who am bound to punish his murderer.' JOHNSON.

[3] — HIRE and SALARY,] Thus the folio. The quartos read—"*base* and *silly*." STEEVENS.

[4] He took my father grossly, FULL OF BREAD;
With all his crimes broad blown,] The uncommon expression, *full of bread*, our poet borrowed from the sacred writings: "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom; pride, *fulness of bread*, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy." *Ezekiel*, xvi. 49. MALONE.

[5] And, how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven?] As it appears from the Ghost's own relation that he was in *purgatory*, Hamlet's doubt could only be how long he had to continue there. RITSON.

[6] Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid HENT:] To *hent* is used by Shakspeare for to *seize*, to *catch*, to *lay hold on*. *Hent* is, therefore, *hold*, or *seizure*. '*Lay hold on* him, sword, at a more horrid time.' JOHNSON.

[7] When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage;
Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed;] So, in Marston's Insatiate Countess, 1613:

At gaming, swearing [8]; or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't:
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven [9]:
And that his soul may be as damn'd, and black,
As hell, whereto it goes [1]. My mother stays:
This physick but prolongs thy sickly days. [*Exit.*

"Didst thou not kill him drunk?
"Thou should'st, or in th' embraces of his lust."
STEEVENS.

[8] At gaming, swearing;] Thus the folio. The quarto 1604 reads—"At *game, a* swearing," &c. MALONE.

[9] — that his heels may kick at heaven;] So, in Heywood's Silver Age, 1613:

"Whose *heels tript* up, *kick'd gainst the firmament.*"
STEEVENS.

[1] As hell, whereto it goes.] This speech, in which Hamlet, represented as a virtuous character, is not content with taking blood for blood, but contrives damnation for the man that he would punish, is too horrible to be read or to be uttered.
JOHNSON.

This speech of Hamlet's, as Johnson observes, is horrible indeed; yet some moral may be extracted from it, as all his subsequent calamities were owing to this savage refinement of revenge. M. MASON.

That a sentiment so infernal should have met with imitators, may excite surprize; and yet the same fiend-like disposition is shown by Lodowick, in Webster's White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona, 1612:

"——— to have poison'd
"The handle of his racket. O, that, that!—
"That while he had been bandying at tennis,
"He might have sworn himself to hell, and struck
"*His soul* into the hazard!"

Again, in The Honest Lawyer, by S. S. 1616:

"I then should strike his body with his *soul*,
"And sink them both together."

Again, in the third of Beaumont and Fletcher's Four Plays in One:

"No: take him dead drunk now, *without repentance.*"
STEEVENS.

The same horrid thought has been adopted by Lewis Machin, in The Dumb Knight, 1633:

"Nay, but be patient, smooth your brow a little,
"And you shall take them as they clip each other;
"Even in the height of sin; then damn them both,

The King rises, and advances.

KING. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
Words, without thoughts, never to heaven go.
[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Another Room in the Same.

Enter QUEEN *and* POLONIUS.

POL. He will come straight. Look, you lay home to him:
Tell him, his pranks have been too broad to bear with;
And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en here[2].
Pray you, be round with him *[3].

* Quarto omits *with him.*

"And let them stink before they ask God pardon,
"That *your revenge may stretch unto their souls.*"
MALONE.

I think it not improbable, that when Shakspeare put this horrid sentiment into the mouth of Hamlet, he might have recollected the following story: "One of these monsters meeting his enemie unarmed, threatned to kill him, if he denied not God, his power, and essential properties, viz. his mercy, suffrance, &c. the which, when the other, desiring life, pronounced with great horror, kneeling upon his knees; the bravo cried out, *nowe will I kill thy body and soule*, and at that instant thrust him through with his rapier." *Brief Discourse of the Spanish State, with a Dialogue annexed intitled Philobasilis*, 4to. 1590, p. 24. REED.

A similar story is told in The Turkish Spy, vol. iii. p. 243. MALONE.

[2] — I'll silence me e'en here.] "*I'll silence me even here,*" is, 'I'll use no more words.' JOHNSON.

[3] — be round with him.] Here the folio interposes, improperly, I think, the following speech:

"*Ham.* [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother." STEEVENS.

Queen. I'll warrant you;
Fear me not:—withdraw, I hear him coming.
[*Polonius hides himself*[4].

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Now, mother; what's the matter?
Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.
Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.
Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.
Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked *
tongue.
Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet?
Ham. What's the matter now?
Queen. Have you forgot me?
Ham. No, by the rood, not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;

* First folio, *an idle*.

4 [*Polonius hides himself.*] The concealment of Polonius in the Queen's chamber, during the conversation between Hamlet and his mother, and the manner of his death, were suggested by the following passage in The Hystory of Hamblet, bl. l. sig. D I: "The counsellour entered secretly into the queene's chamber, and there *hid himselfe behinde the arras*, and long before the queene and Hamlet came thither; who being craftie and pollitique, as soone as hee was within the chamber, doubting some treason, and fearing if he should speake severely and wisely to his mother, touching his secret practises, hee should be understood, and by that means intercepted, used his ordinary manner of dissimulation, and began to come like a cocke, beating with his arms (in such manner as cockes use to strike with their wings) upon the hangings of the chamber; whereby feeling something stirring under them, he cried, *a rat*, *a rat*, and presently drawing his sworde, thrust it into the hangings; which done; pulled the counsellour (half-deade) out by the heeles, made an ende of killing him; and, being slaine, cut his body in pieces, which he caused to be boyled, and then cast it into an open vault or privie." Malone.

And,—'would it were not so [5]!—you are my mother.

QUEEN. Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

HAM. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;
You go not, till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

QUEEN. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?
Help, help, ho!

POL. [*Behind.*] What, ho! help!

HAM. How now! a rat [6]? [*Draws.*] Dead, for a ducat dead.

[*HAMLET makes a pass through the Arras.*

POL. [*Behind.*] O, I am slain. [*Falls and dies.*

QUEEN. O me, what hast thou done?

HAM. Nay, I know not:
Is it the king?

[*Lifts up the Arras, and draws forth POLONIUS.*

QUEEN. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

HAM. A bloody deed:—almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

QUEEN. As kill a king [7]!

[5] And,—'would it were not so!] The folio reads—
"*But* would *you* were not so." HENDERSON.

[6] How now! a rat?] This (as Dr. Farmer has observed,) is an expression borrowed from The History of Hamblet, a translation from the French of Belleforest. STEEVENS.

[7] *Queen.* As kill a king!] This exclamation may be considered as some hint that the Queen had no hand in the murder of Hamlet's father. STEEVENS.

It has been doubted whether Shakspeare intended to represent the Queen as accessary to the murder of her husband. The surprise she here expresses at the charge seems to tend to her exculpation. Where the variation is not particularly marked, we may presume, I think, that the poet intended to tell his story as it had been told before. The following extract, therefore, from

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.—
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
[*To Polonius.*

The Hystory of Hamblet, bl. l. relative to this point, will probably not be unacceptable to the reader: "Fengon [the king in the present play] boldened and encouraged by such impunitie, durst venture to couple himself in marriage with her, whom he used as his concubine during good Horvendille's life; in that sort spotting his name with a double vice, incestuous adulterie, and paracide murther.—This adulterer and infamous murtherer slaundered his dead brother, that he would have slaine his wife, and that hee by chance finding him on the point ready to do it, in defence of the lady, had slaine him.—The unfortunate and wicked woman that had received the honour to be the wife of one of the valiantest and wisest princes in the North, imbased herselfe in such vile sort as to falsifie her faith unto him, and, which is worse, to marrie him that had bin the tyrannous murtherer of her lawful husband; *which made diverse men think that she had been the causer of the murther*, thereby to live in her adulterie without controle." *Hyst. of Hamb.* sig. C 1. 2.

In the conference, however, with her son, on which the present scene is founded, she strongly asserts her innocence with respect to this fact:

"I know well, my sonne, that I have done thee great wrong in marrying with Fengon, the cruel tyrant and murtherer of thy father, and my loyal spouse; but when thou shalt consider the small means of resistance, and the treason of the palace, with the little cause of confidence we are to expect, or hope for, of the courtiers, all wrought to his will; as also the power he made ready if I should have refused to like him; thou wouldst rather excuse, than accuse me of lasciviousness or inconstancy, much less offer me that wrong *to suspect that ever thy mother Geruth once consented to the death and murther of her husband:* swearing unto thee by the majestie of the gods, that if it had layne in me to have resisted the tyrant, although it had beene with the losse of my blood, yea and of my life, I would surely have saved the life of my lord and husband." *Ibid.* sig. D 4.

It is observable, that in the drama neither the king or queen make so good a defence. Shakspeare wished to render them as odious as he could, and therefore has not in any part of the play furnished them with even the semblance of an excuse for their conduct.

Though the inference already mentioned may be drawn from the surprize which our poet has here made the Queen express at being charged with the murder of her husband, it is observable that when the Player-Queen in the preceding scene says:

I took thee for thy better * ; take thy fortune :
Thou find'st, to be too busy, is some danger.—

* First folio, *betters*.

" In second husband let me be accurst !
" None wed the second, *but who kill'd the first.*"

he has made Hamlet exclaim—" *that's wormwood.*" The Prince, therefore, both from the expression and the words addressed to his mother in the present scene, must be supposed to think her guilty.—Perhaps after all this investigation, the truth is, that Shakspeare himself meant to leave the matter in doubt. MALONE.

I know not in what part of this tragedy the King and Queen could have been expected to enter into a vindication of their mutual conduct. The former indeed is rendered contemptible as well as guilty ; but for the latter our poet seems to have felt all that tenderness which the Ghost recommends to the imitation of her son. STEEVENS.

Had Shakspeare thought fit to have introduced the topicks I have suggested, can there be a doubt concerning his ability to introduce them ? The king's justification, if to justify had been the poet's object, (which it certainly was not,) might have been made in a soliloquy ; the queen's, in the present interview with her son. MALONE.

It might not unappositely be observed, that every new commentator, like Sir T. Hanmer's Othello, must often " *make* the meat he feeds on." Some slight objection to every opinion already offered, may be found ; and, if in doubtful cases we are to presume that " the poet tells his stories as they have been told before," we must put new constructions on many of his scenes, as well as new comments on their verbal obscurities.

For instance—touching the manner in which Hamlet disposed of Polonius's body. The black-letter history tells us he " cut it in pieces, which he caused to be boiled, and then cast it into an open vault or privie." Are we to conclude therefore that he did so in the play before us, because our author has left the matter doubtful ? Hamlet is only made to tell us, that this dead counsellor was " safely stowed." He afterwards adds, " —you shall *nose* him," &c. ; all which might have been the case, had the direction of the aforesaid history been exactly followed. In this transaction then (which I call a doubtful one, because the remains of Polonius might have been rescued from the *forica*, and afterwards have received their " hugger-mugger " funeral) am I at liberty to suppose he had had the fate of Heliogabalus, *in cloacam missus?*

That the Queen (who may still be regarded as innocent of murder) might have offered some apology for her " over-hasty

Leave wringing of your hands: Peace; sit you down,
And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff;
If damned custom have not braz'd it so,
That it be * proof and bulwark against sense.

QUEEN. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

HAM. Such an act,
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;
Calls virtue, hypocrite; takes off the rose [8]

* First folio, *is.*

marriage," can easily be supposed; but Mr. Malone has not suggested what defence could have been set up by the royal fratricide. My acute predecessor, as well as the novelist, must have been aware that though female weakness, and an offence against the forms of the world, will admit of extenuation, such guilt as that of the usurper could not have been palliated by the dramatick art of Shakspeare; even if the father of Hamlet had been represented as a wicked instead of a virtuous character.

STEEVENS.

The notes on this subject are already so long that I will content myself with asking if it can be supposed that Shakspeare intended so important a point to be left in doubt; or that Hamlet, in this interview, would directly reproach his mother with her marriage alone, if she had added to it guilt so much more enormous as the murder of her husband? BOSWELL.

[8] —takes off the ROSE, &c.] Alluding to the custom of wearing roses on the side of the face. See a note on a passage in King John, Act I. WARBURTON.

I believe Dr. Warburton is mistaken; for it must be allowed that there is a material difference between an ornament worn to the *forehead*, and one exhibited on *the side of the face*. Some have understood these words to be only a metaphorical enlargement of the sentiment contained in the preceding line:

" —— blurs the grace and *blush* of modesty: "

but as the *forehead* is no proper situation for a *blush* to be displayed in, we may have recourse to another explanation.

It was once the custom for those who were betrothed, to wear some flower as an external and conspicuous mark of their mutual engagement. So, in Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar for April:

From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And sets * a blister there; makes marriage vows

* First folio, *makes.*

" Bring *coronations* and *sops in wine,*
" *Worn of paramours.*"

Lyte, in his Herbal, 1578, enumerates *sops in wine* among the smaller kind of single gilliflowers or pinks.

Figure 4, in the *Morrice-dance* (a plate of which is annexed to The First Part of King Henry IV.) has a flower fixed on his *forehead*, and seems to be meant for the *paramour* of the female character. The flower might be designed for a *rose*, as the colour of it is red in the painted glass, though its form is expressed with as little adherence to nature as that of the marygold in the hand of the lady. It may, however, conduct us to affix a new meaning to the lines in question. This flower, as I have since discovered, is exactly shaped like the *sops in wine*, now called the *Deptford Pink*.

An Address " To all Judiciall Censurers," prefixed to The Whipper of the Satyre his Pennance in a white Sheete, or the Beadle's Confutation, 1601, begins likewise thus:

" Brave sprited gentles, on whose comely *front*
" The *rose* of favour sits majesticall—."

Sets a *blister* there, has the same meaning as in Measure for Measure:

" Who falling in the flaws of her own youth,
" Hath *blister'd* her report." STEEVENS.

I believe, by the *rose* was only meant the *roseate hue*. The forehead certainly appears to us an odd place for the hue of innocence to dwell on, but Shakspeare might place it there with as much propriety as a *smile*. In Troilus and Cressida, we find these lines:

" So rich advantage of a promis'd glory,
" As *smiles* upon the *forehead* of this action."

That part of the forehead which is situated between the eyebrows, seems to have been considered by our poet as the seat of innocence and modesty. So, in a subsequent scene:

" ——— brands the harlot,
" Even here, between the *chaste* and unsmirch'd *brow*
" Of my true mother."

And our poet's contemporary, John Ford, has placed honour and wisdom on the same part of the countenance:

" As noble by his wit as by his bloud,
" Honour and wisdom on his forehead stood. MALONE.

Rose is put generally for the *ornament*, the *grace*, of an innocent love. BOSWELL.

As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed
As from the body of contraction [9] plucks
The very soul; and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words: Heaven's face doth glow;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act [1].

In the foregoing quotation from Troilus and Cressida, I understand that the *forehead* is *smiled upon by advantage*, and not that the *forehead is itself the smiler*. Thus, says Laertes in the play before us:

"Occasion *smiles upon* a second *leave*."

But it is not the *leave* that *smiles*, but *occasion* that *smiles upon it*.

In the subsequent passage, our author had no choice; for having alluded to that part of the face which was anciently branded with a mark of shame, he was compelled to place his token of innocence in a corresponding situation. STEEVENS.

9 — from the body of CONTRACTION —] *Contraction*, for *marriage contract*. WARBURTON.

1 — Heaven's face doth glow;
Yea, the solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.] If any sense can be found here, it is this. The sun glows [and does it not always?] and the very solid mass of earth has a tristful visage, and is thought-sick. All this is sad stuff. The old quarto reads much nearer to the poet's sense:

"Heaven's *face* does glow,
"*O'er* this solidity and compound mass,
"With *heated* visage, as against the doom,
"Is thought-sick at the act."

From whence it appears, that Shakspeare wrote,

'Heaven's face doth glow,
'*O'er* this solidity and compound mass,
'With tristful visage; *and*, as 'gainst the doom,
'Is thought-sick at the act.'

This makes a fine sense, and to this effect. The sun looks upon our globe, the scene of this murder, with an angry and mournful countenance, half hid in eclipse, as at the day of doom.
WARBURTON.

The word *heated*, though it agrees well enough with *glow*, is, I think, not so striking as *tristful*, which was, I suppose, chosen at the revisal. I believe the whole passage now stands as the author gave it. Dr. Warburton's reading restores two improprieties,

Queen. Ah me, what act,
That roars so loud [2], and thunders in the index [3] ?
Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this [4] ;

which Shakspeare, by his alteration, had removed. In the first, and in the new reading, "Heaven's *face* glows with tristful *visage;*" and, "Heaven's face is *thought-sick.*" To the common reading there is no just objection. JOHNSON.

I am strongly inclined to think that the reading of the quarto 1604 is the true one. In Shakspeare's licentious diction, the meaning may be,—'The face of heaven doth glow with heated visage over the earth: *and heaven*, as against the day of judgment, is thought-sick at the act.'

Had not our poet St. Luke's description of the last day in his thoughts?—"And there shall be signs in the sun and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring: men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking on those things which are coming on the earth; for the powers of heaven shall be shaken," &c. MALONE.

[2] That roars so loud,] The meaning is,—'*What is* this act, of which the *discovery*, or *mention*, cannot be made, but with this violence of clamour?' JOHNSON.

[3] — and thunders in the INDEX?] Mr. Edwards observes, that the *indexes* of many old books were at that time inserted at the beginning, instead of the end, as is now the custom. This observation I have often seen confirmed.

So, in Othello, Act II. Sc. VII.: "—— an *index* and obscure *prologue* to the history of lust and foul thoughts." STEEVENS.

Bullokar, in his Expositor, 8vo. 1616, defines an *Index* by "A *table* in a booke." The *table* was almost always *prefixed* to the books of our poet's age. *Indexes*, in the sense in which we now understand the word, were very uncommon. MALONE.

[4] Look here, upon this picture, and on this;] It is evident, from the following words,

"*A station*, like the herald Mercury," &c.

that these pictures, which are introduced as miniatures on the stage, were meant for whole lengths, being part of the furniture of the Queen's closet:

"—— like Maia's son he stood,
"And shook his plumes." *Paradise Lost*, book v.

Hamlet, who, in a former scene, had censured those who gave "forty, fifty, a hundred ducats apiece" for his uncle's "picture in little," would hardly have condescended to carry such a thing in his pocket. STEEVENS.

The introduction of miniatures in this place appears to be a

The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this * brow:
Hyperion's curls [5]; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury [6],

* First folio, *his.*

modern innovation. A print prefixed to Rowe's edition of Hamlet, published in 1709, proves this. There the two royal portraits are exhibited as half-lengths, hanging in the Queen's closet; and either thus, or as whole-lengths, they probably were exhibited from the time of the original performance of this tragedy to the death of Betterton. To half-lengths, however, the same objection lies, as to miniatures. MALONE.

We may also learn, that from this print the trick of kicking the chair down on the appearance of the Ghost, was adopted by modern Hamlets from the practice of their predecessors. STEEVENS.

5 HYPERION'S curls;] It is observable, that *Hyperion* is used by Spenser with the same error in *quantity*. FARMER.

I have never met with an earlier edition of Marston's Insatiate Countess than that in 1613. In this the following lines occur, which bear a close resemblance to Hamlet's description of his father:

" A donative he hath of every god;
" *Apollo* gave him *locks*, *Jove* his high *front*."
—— dignos et *Apolline crines*.

Ovid's Metam. b. iii. thus translated by Golding, 1587:

" And haire that one might worthily Apollo's haire it deeme."

STEEVENS.

6 A STATION like the herald MERCURY, &c.] *Station*, in this instance, does not mean *the spot where any one is placed*, but *the act of standing*. So, in Antony and Cleopatra, Act III. Sc. III.:

" Her motion and her *station* are as one."

On turning to Mr. Theobald's first edition, I find that he had made the same remark, and supported it by the same instance. The observation is necessary, for otherwise the compliment designed to the attitude of the King would be bestowed on the place where Mercury is represented as standing. STEEVENS.

In the first scene of Timon of Athens, the poet, admiring a picture, introduces the same image:

" —— How this *grace*
" Speaks his own *standing!*" MALONE.

I think it not improbable that Shakspeare caught this image from Phaer's translation of Virgil, (fourth Æneid,) a book that without doubt he had read:

" And now approaching neere, the top he seeth and mighty lims

New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill [7];
A combination, and a form, indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man:
This was your husband.—Look you now, what follows:
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother [8]. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten [9] on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it, love: for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood [1] is tame, it's humble,

"Of *Atlas, mountain tough*, that *heaven* on boist'rous *shoulders beares*;—
"There *first* on ground with wings of might doth *Mercury* arrive,
"Then down from thence right over seas himselfe doth headlong drive."

In the margin are these words: "The description of *Mercury's* journey from *heaven*, along the *mountain* Atlas in Afrike, *highest* on earth." MALONE.

7 — HEAVEN-KISSING hill;] So, in Troilus and Cressida:

"Yon towers whose wanton tops do *buss the clouds*."

Again, in Chapman's version of the fourteenth Iliad:

"A fir it was that shot past air, and *kiss'd* the burning *sky*."

STEEVENS.

8 — like a MILDEW'D EAR,
BLASTING his wholesome brother.] This alludes to Pharaoh's dream, in the 41st chapter of Genesis. STEEVENS.

9 — batten —] i. e. to grow fat. So, in Claudius Tiberius Nero, 1607:

"———— and for milk
"I *batten'd* was with blood."

Again, in Marlowe's Jew of Malta, 1633:

"—— make her round and plump,
"And *batten* more than you are aware."

Bat is an ancient word for *increase*. Hence the adjective *batful*, so often used by Drayton in his Polyolbion. STEEVENS.

1 The HEY-DAY in the blood —] This expression occurs in Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, 1633:

"———— must
"The *hey-day* of your luxury be fed
"Up to a surfeit?" STEEVENS.

And waits upon the judgment; And what judgment
Would step from this to this? [Sense, sure, you have,
Else, could you not have motion [2]: But, sure, that sense
Is apoplex'd: for madness would not err;
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd,
But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference.] What devil was't,
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind [3]?

[2] — [Sense, sure, you have,
Else could you not have MOTION:] But from what philosophy our editors learnt this, I cannot tell. Since *motion* depends so little upon *sense*, that the greatest part of *motion* in the universe, is amongst bodies devoid of *sense*. We should read:

Else, could you not have *notion*.

i. e. intellect, reason, &c. This alludes to the famous peripatic principle of "Nil fit in *intellectu*, quod non fuerit in *sensu*." And how fond our author was of applying, and alluding to, the principles of this philosophy, we have given several instances. The principle in particular has been since taken for the foundation of one of the noblest works that these latter ages have produced. WARBURTON.

The whole passage is wanting in the folio; and which soever of the readings be the true one, the poet was not indebted to this boasted philosophy for his choice. STEEVENS.

Sense is sometimes used by Shakspeare for sensation or *sensual appetite;* as *motion* is the effect produced by the impulse of nature. Such, I think, is the signification of these words here. So, in Measure for Measure:

"—— she speaks, and 'tis
"Such sense, that my *sense* breeds with it."

Again, more appositely in the same play, where both the words occur:

"———— One who never feels
"The wanton stings and *motions* of the *sense*."

So, in Braithwaite's Survey of Histories, 1614: "These *continent* relations will reduce the straggling *motions* to a more settled and retired harbour."

Sense has already been used in this scene, for *sensation:*

"That it be proof and bulwark against *sense*," MALONE.

[3] — at HOODMAN-BLIND?] This is, I suppose, the same as *blindman's-buff*. So, in The Wise Woman of Hogsden, 1638:

[Eyes without feeling [4], feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope [5].]
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones [6],
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame,
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge;
Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
And reason panders will [7].

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more:

"Why should I play at *hoodman-blind?*"

Again, in Two Lamentable Tragedies in One, the One a Murder of Master Beech, &c. 1601:

"Pick out men's eyes, and tell them that's the sport
"Of *hood-man blind*." Steevens.

[4] Eyes without feeling, &c.] This and the three following lines are omitted in the folio, Steevens.

[5] Could not so MOPE.] i. e. could not exhibit such marks of stupidity. The same word is used in The Tempest, sc. ult.:

"And were brought *moping* hither." Steevens.

[6] — Rebellious hell,
If thou canst MUTINE in a matron's bones, &c.] Thus the old copies. Shakspeare calls *mutineers*,—*mutines*, in a subsequent scene. Steevens.

So, in Othello:

"—— this hand of yours requires
"A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer,
"Much castigation, exercise devout;
"For here's a young and sweating *devil* here,
"That commonly *rebels*."

To *mutine*, for which the modern editors have substituted *mutiny*, was the ancient term, signifying to rise in *mutiny*. So, in Knolles's History of the Turks, 1603: "The Janisaries—became wonderfully discontented, and began to *mutine* in diverse places of the citie." Malone.

[7] — reason PANDERS will.] So the folio, I think, rightly; but the reading of the quarto is defensible:

"——— reason *pardons* will." Johnson.

Panders was certainly Shakspeare's word. So, in Venus and Adonis:

"When *reason* is the *bawd* to *lust's abuse*." Malone.

Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained [8] spots,
As will not leave their tinct [9].

Ham. Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed [1];

[8] — grained —] Died in grain. JOHNSON.

I am not quite certain that the epithet—*grained*, is justly interpreted. Our author employs the same adjective in The Comedy of Errors:

"Though now this *grained* face of mine be hid," &c.

and in this instance the allusion is most certainly to the furrows in the *grain* of wood.

Shakspeare might therefore design the Queen to say, that her spots of guilt were not merely superficial, but indented.—A passage, however, in Twelfth Night, will sufficiently authorize Dr. Johnson's explanation: "'Tis in *grain*, sir, 'twill endure wind and weather." STEEVENS.

The words *spot* and *tinct* show decisively that Johnson's interpretation is the true one. MALONE.

[9] As will not LEAVE their tinct.] To *leave* is 'to part with, give up, resign.' So, in The Two Gentlemen of Verona:

"It seems, you lov'd her not, to *leave* her token."

The quartos read:

"As will *leave there* their tinct." STEEVENS.

The three lines are thus varied in the quarto:

"Thou turn'st my *very eyes into my soul;*
"And there I see such black and *grieved* spots
"As will *leave there* their tinct." BOSWELL.

[1] — ENSEAMED bed;] Thus the folio: i. e. *greasy* bed. JOHNSON.

Thus also the quarto 1604. Beaumont and Fletcher use the word *inseamed* in the same sense, in the third of their Four Plays in One:

"His leachery *inseam'd* upon him."

In The Book of Haukyng, &c. bl. l. no date, we are told that "*Ensayme* of a hauke is *the grece*."

In Randle Holme's Academy of Armory and Blazon, b. ii. ch. ii. p. 238, we are told that "*Enseame* is the purging of a hawk from her glut and grease." From the next page in the same work, we learn that the *glut* is "a slimy substance in the belly of the hawk."

In some places it means hogs' lard; in others, the grease or oil with which clothiers besmear their wool to make it draw out in spinning.

Incestuous is the reading of the quarto 1611. STEEVENS.

In the West of England, the *inside fat* of a goose, when dis-

Stew'd in corruption; honeying, and making love
Over the nasty stye;——
Queen. O, speak to me no more;
These words, like daggers enter in mine ears;
No more, sweet Hamlet.
Ham. A murderer, and a villain.
A slave, that is not twentieth part the tythe
Of your precedent lord:—a vice of kings[2]:
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule;
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole[3],
And put it in his pocket!
Queen. No more.

Enter Ghost.

Ham. A king of shreds and patches[4]:—
Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards!—What would your* gracious figure?
Queen. Alas, he's mad.
Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion[5], lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O, say!

* First folio, *you*.

solved by heat, is called its *seam*; and Shakspeare has used the word in the same sense in his Troilus and Cressida:

"——— shall the proud lord,
"That bastes his arrogance with his own *seam*." Henley.

[2] —vice of kings:] A low mimick of kings. The vice is the fool of a farce; from whence the modern *Punch* is descended. Johnson.

[3] That from a shelf, &c.] This is said not unmeaningly, but to show, that the usurper came not to the crown by any glorious villainy that carried danger with it, but by the low cowardly theft of a common pilferer. Warburton.

[4] A king of shreds and patches:] This is said, pursuing the idea of the *vice of kings*. The *vice* was dressed as a fool, in a coat of party-coloured patches. Johnson.

[5] —laps'd in time and passion,] That, having suffered *time* to *slip*, and *passion* to *cool*, *lets go*, &c. Johnson.

Ghost. Do not forget: This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look! amazement on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul:
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works[6];
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is't with you?
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse;
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements[7],
Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience[8]. Whereon do you look?

[6] Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works;] *Conceit* for *imagination*.

So, in The Rape of Lucrece:

"And the *conceited* painter was so nice." Malone.

See Romeo and Juliet, Act II. Sc. VI. Steevens.

[7] — like life in excrements,] The hairs are excrementitious, that is, without life or sensation; yet those very hairs, as if they had life, start up, &c. Pope.

So, in Macbeth:

"The time has been——
"——————— my fell of *hair*,
"Would at a dismal treatise *rouse and stir*,
"*As life were in't*." Malone.

Not only the hair of animals having neither life nor sensation was called an *excrement*, but the feathers of birds had the same appellation. Thus, in Izaac Walton's Complete Angler, p. i. ch. i. p. 9, edit. 1766: "I will not undertake to mention the several kinds of fowl by which this is done, and his curious palate pleased by day; and which, with their very *excrements*, afford him a soft lodging at night. Whalley.

[8] Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience.] This metaphor seems to have been suggested by an old black letter novel, (already quoted in a note on The Merchant of Venice, Act III. Sc. II.) Green's History of the fair Bellora: "Therefore slake the burning *heate* of thy *flaming* affections, with some drops of *cooling* moderation." Steevens.

Ham. On him! on him!—Look you, how pale he glares!
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones[9],
Would make them capable[1].—Do not look upon me;
Lest, with this piteous action, you convert
My stern effects[2]: then what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all, that is, I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing, but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he liv'd[3]!

9 — preaching to stones —] Thus, in Sidney's Arcadia, lib. v.: "Their passions then so swelling in them, they would have made *auditors of stones*, rather than," &c. Steevens.

1 His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them CAPABLE.] *Capable* here signifies *intelligent*; endued with understanding. So, in King Richard the Third:

"———— O, 'tis a parlous boy,
"Bold, quick, ingenious, forward, *capable*."

We yet use *capacity* in this sense. See also Henry VIII. Act V. Sc. II. Malone.

2 My stern EFFECTS:] *Effects*, for *actions*, *deeds effected*. Malone.

3 My father, in his habit as he liv'd!] If the poet means by this expression, that his father appeared in his own *familiar habit*, he has either forgot that he had originally introduced him in *armour*, or must have meant to vary his dress at this his last appearance. Shakspeare's difficulty might perhaps be a little obviated by pointing the line thus:

"My father—in his habit—as he liv'd!" Steevens.

A man's armour, who is used to wear it, may be called his *habit*, as well as any other kind of clothing. *As he lived*, probably means—'as if he were alive—as if he lived.' M. Mason.

As if is frequently so used in these plays; but this interpreta-

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!
[*Exit Ghost.*

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in [4].

Ham. Ecstasy!
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful musick: It is not madness,
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that * flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place [5];
Whil'st rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds [6],
To make them ranker.† Forgive me this my virtue:

* First folio, *a*. † First folio, *ranke*.

tion does not entirely remove the difficulty which has been stated. Malone.

[4] This is the very COINAGE of your brain:
THIS BODILESS CREATION ECSTACY
Is very cunning in.] So, in The Rape of Lucrece:
"Such *shadows* are the weak *brain's forgeries*." Malone.

Ecstasy in this place, and many others, means a temporary alienation of mind, a fit. So, in Eliosto Libidinoso, a novel, by John Hinde, 1606: "—— that bursting out of an *ecstasy* wherein she had long stood, like one beholding Medusa's head, lamenting," &c. Steevens.

Minshieu has thus accurately explained this word: "Extasie, or trance. G. extasé, Lat. extasis, abstractio mentis. Est propriè mentis emotio, et quasi ex statione suâ deturbatio, seu furore, seu admiratione, seu timore, aliove casu decidat."
Minshieu, 1617. Malone.

[5] — SKIN and film the ulcerous place;] The same indelicate allusion occurs in Measure for Measure:
"That *skins* the vice o' the top." Steevens.

[6] — do not spread the compost, &c.] Do not, by any new indulgence, heighten your former offences. Johnson.

For in the fatness of these pursy times,
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg;
Yea, curb[7] and woo, for leave to do him good.

Queen. O Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night: but go not to my uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
[That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this[8];
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,
That aptly is put on:] Refrain to-night;
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: [the next more easy[9]:

7 — curb —] That is, *bend* and *truckle*, Fr. *courber*. So, in Pierce Plowman:

"Then I *courbid* on my knees," &c. Steevens.

8 That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this.] This passage is left out in the two elder folios: it is certainly corrupt, and the players did the discreet part to stifle what they did not understand. *Habit's devil* certainly arose from some conceited tamperer with the text, who thought it was necessary, in contrast to *angel*. The emendation in my text I owe to the sagacity of Dr. Thirlby:

"That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat
"Of *habits evil*, is angel," &c. Theobald.

I think Thirlby's conjecture wrong, though the succeeding editors have followed it; *angel* and *devil* are evidently opposed. Johnson.

I incline to think with Dr. Thirlby; though I have left the text undisturbed. From *That monster* to *put on*, is not in the folio. Malone.

I would read—*Or* habit's devil. The poet first styles *custom* a *monster*, and may aggravate and amplify his description by adding, that it is the "dæmon who presides over habit."—That monster custom, or habit's devil, is yet an angel in this particular. Steevens.

Of habit's devil, means, I think, *a devil in his usual habits*. Boswell.

9 — [the next more easy:] This passage, as far as *potency*, is omitted in the folio. Steevens.

For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either curb the devil [1], or throw him out
With wondrous potency.] Once more, good night:
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,
[*Pointing to* POLONIUS.
I do repent: But heaven hath pleas'd it so,—
To punish me with this, and this with me [2],
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night!—
I must be cruel, only to be kind [3]:

[1] And either CURB the devil, &c.] In the quarto, where alone this passage is found, some word was accidentally omitted at the press in the line before us. The quarto 1604 reads:

"And either the devil, *or throw him out*," &c.

For the insertion of the word *curb* I am answerable. The printer or corrector of a later quarto, finding the line nonsense, omitted the word *either*, and substituted *master* in its place. The modern editors have accepted the substituted word, and yet retain *either;* by which the metre is destroyed. The word omitted in the first copy was undoubtedly a monosyllable. MALONE.

This very rational conjecture may be countenanced by the same expression in The Merchant of Venice:

"And *curb* this cruel *devil* of his will." STEEVENS.

[2] To punish me with this, and this with me,] To punish me by making me the instrument of this man's death, and to punish this man by my hand. For this, the reading of both the quarto and folio, Sir T. Hanmer and the subsequent editors have substituted—

"To punish *him with me, and me with him*." MALONE.

I take leave to vindicate the last editor of the octavo Shakspeare from any just share in the foregoing accusation. Whoever looks into the edition 1785, will see the line before us printed exactly as in this and Mr. Malone's text.—In several preceding instances a similar censure on the same gentleman has been as undeservedly implied. STEEVENS.

[3] I must be CRUEL, only to be KIND:] This sentiment resembles the—*facto pius, et sceleratus eodem*, of Ovid's Metamorphosis, b. iii. It is thus translated by Golding:

"For which he might both justly *kinde*, and *cruel* called bee."

STEEVENS.

Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.—
But one word more, good lady [4].

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king [5] tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you, his mouse [6];
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses [7],

4 But one word more, &c.] This passage I have restored from the quartos. For the sake of metre, however, I have supplied the conjunction—*But*. Steevens.

5 Let the bloat king—] i. e. the swollen king. *Bloat* is the reading of the quarto 1604. Malone.

This again hints at his intemperance. He had already drank himself into a dropsy. Blackstone.

The folio reads—*blunt* king. Henderson.

6 — his mouse:] *Mouse* was once a term of endearment. So, in Warner's Albion's England 1602, b. ii. ch. xvi.:

"God bless thee *mouse*, the bridegroom said," &c.

Again, in the Menæchmi, 1595: "Shall I tell thee, sweet *mouse*? I never look upon thee, but I am quite out of love with my wife."

Again, in Churchyard's Spider and Gowt, 1575:

"She wan the love of all the house,
"And pranckt it like a pretty *mouse*."

Again, in Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, edit. 1632, p. 527: "—pleasant names may be invented, bird, *mouse*, lamb, pus, pigeon," &c. Steevens.

This term of endearment is very ancient, being found in A New and Merry Enterlude, called the Trial of Treasure, 1567:

"*My mouse*, my nobs, my cony sweete;
"My hope and joye, my whole delight." Malone.

7 — reechy kisses,] *Reechy* is *smoky*. The author meant to convey a coarse idea, and was not very scrupulous in his choice of an epithet. The same, however, is applied with greater propriety to the neck of a cook-maid in Coriolanus. Again, in Hans Beer Pot's Invisible Comedy, 1610:

"———— bade him go
"And wash his face, he look'd so *reechily*,
"Like bacon hanging on the chimney's roof." Steevens.

Reechy properly means *steaming with exudation*, and seems to have been selected, to convey, in this place, its grossest import. Henley.

Reechy includes, I believe, *heat* as well as *smoke*. The verb to *reech*, which was once common, was certainly a corruption of—to

Or padling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft [8]. 'Twere good, you let him know:

reek. In a former passage Hamlet has remonstrated with his mother, on her living—

"In the *rank sweat* of an enseamed bed." MALONE.

Reeky most certainly was not designed by our author to convey the idea of *heat*, being employed by him in Romeo and Juliet, to signify the *chili damp* of human bones in a sepulchre:

"—— *reeky* shanks, and yellow chapless sculls."

STEEVENS.

Reeky, in the passage quoted from Romeo and Juliet, has a different meaning, and signifies *wasted away*. See the word to *reek* in Grose's Provincial Glossary. MALONE.

[8] That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft.] The reader will be pleased to see Dr. Farmer's extract from the old quarto Historie of Hamblet, of which he had a fragment only in his possession:—"It was not without cause, and just occasion, that my gestures, countenances, and words, seeme to proceed from a madman, and that I desire to haue all men esteeme mee wholly depriued of sense and reasonable understanding, bycause I am well assured, that he that hath made no conscience to kill his owne brother, (accustomed to murthers, and allured with desire of gouernement without controll in his treasons) will not spare to saue himselfe with the like crueltie, in the blood and flesh of the loyns of his brother, by him massacred; and therefore it is better for me to fayne madnesse, then to use my right sences as nature hath bestowed them upon me. The bright shining clearnes thereof I am forced to hide vnder this shadow of dissimulation, as the sun doth hir beams under some great cloud, when the wether in summer-time ouercasteth: the face of a madman serueth to couer my gallant countenance, and the gestures of a fool are fit for me, to the end that, guiding myself wisely therein, I may preserue my life for the Danes and the memory of my late deceased father; for that the desire of reuenging his death is so ingraven in my heart, that if I dye not shortly, I hope to take such and so great vengeance, that these countryes shall for euer speake thereof. Neuerthelesse I must stay the time, meanes, and occasion, lest by making ouer-great hast, I be now the cause of mine own sodaine ruine and ouerthrow, and by that meanes end, before I beginne to effect my hearts desire: hee that hath to doe with a wicked, disloyall, cruell, and discourteous man, must vse craft, and politike inuentions, such as a fine witte can best imagine, not to discover his

For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib [9],
Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
No, in despite of sense, and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly [1]; and, like the famous ape,
To try conclusions [2], in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England [3]; you know that?

interprise; for seeing that by force I cannot effect my desire, reason alloweth me by dissimulation, subtiltie, and secret practises to proceed therein." Steevens.

9 — a GIB,] So, in Drayton's Epistle from Elinor Cobham to Duke Humphrey:

"And call me beldam, *gib*, witch, night-mare, trot."

Gib was a common name for a *cat*. So, in Chaucer's Romaunt of the Rose, ver. 6204:

"——— *gibbe* our cat,
"That waiteth mice and rats to killen." Steevens.

See Henry IV. Part I. Act I. Sc. II. Malone.

1 Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly;] Sir John Suckling, in one of his letters, may possibly allude to the same story: "It is the story of the *jackanapes* and the partridges; thou starest after a beauty till it be lost to thee, and then let'st out another, and starest after that till it is gone too." Warner.

2 To try conclusions,] i. e. experiments. Steevens.

3 I must to England;] Shakspeare does not inform us how Hamlet came to know that he was to be sent to England. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were made acquainted with the King's intentions for the first time in the very last scene; and they do not appear to have had any communication with the Prince since that time. Add to this, that in a subsequent scene, when the King, after the death of Polonius, informs Hamlet he was to go to England, he expresses great surprize, as if he had not heard any thing of it before.—This last, however, may, perhaps, be accounted for, as contributing to his design of passing for a madman. Malone.

QUEEN. Alack,
I had forgot; 'tis so concluded on.
HAM. There's letters seal'd [4]: and my two school-fellows,—
Whom I will trust, as I will adders fang'd [5],—
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way [6],
And marshal me to knavery: Let it work;
For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer
Hoist with his own petar [7]: and it shall go hard,
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon: O, 'tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet [8].—
This man shall set me packing.
I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room [9]:—

[4] There's letters seal'd, &c.] The nine following verses are added out of the old edition. POPE.

[5] — adders FANG'D,] That is, adders with their *fangs* or *poisonous teeth*, undrawn. It has been the practice of mountebanks to boast the efficacy of their antidotes by playing with vipers, but they first disabled their *fangs*. JOHNSON.

[6] — they must sweep my way, &c.] This phrase occurs again in Antony and Cleopatra:

" —— some friends, that will
" *Sweep your way* for you." STEEVENS.

[7] HOIST with his own PETAR;] *Hoist*, for *hoised*; as *past*, for *passed*. STEEVENS.

In Fletcher's Fair Maid of the Inn, we have a similar image:

" ——— 'Twas he
" Gave heat unto the injury, which returned
" Like a *petar* ill-lighted into th' bosom
" Of him gave fire to't." BOSWELL.

[8] When in ONE LINE two crafts directly meet.] Still alluding to a *countermine*. MALONE.

The same expression has already occurred in K. John, Act IV. scene ult.:

" Now powers from home, and discontents at home,
" *Meet in one line*." STEEVENS.

[9] I'll lug the GUTS into the neighbour room:] A line somewhat similar occurs in King Henry VI. P. III.:

" I'll throw thy body in another room ——."

The word *guts* was not anciently so offensive to delicacy as it is at present; but was used by Lyly (who made the *first* attempt to polish our language) in his serious compositions. So, in his My-

Mother, good night.—Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish * prating knave.
Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you [1]:
Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally; HAMLET dragging in POLONIUS.*

ACT IV [2]. SCENE I.

The Same.

Enter King, Queen, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

KING. There's matter * in these sighs; these profound heaves;

* Quarto, *in's life a most foolish.* † First folio, *matters.*

das, 1592: "Could not the treasure of Phrygia, nor the tributes of Greece, nor mountains in the East, whose *guts* are gold, satisfy thy mind?" In short, *guts* was used where we now use *entrails*. Stanyhurst often has it in his translation of Virgil, 1582:

Pectoribus inhians spirantia consulit *exta*.

"She weenes her fortune by *guts* hoate smoakye to conster."

Again, in Chapman's version of the sixth Iliad:

"—— in whose *guts* the king of men imprest
"His ashen lance —." STEEVENS.

[1] Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you:] Shakspeare has been unfortunate in his management of the story of this play, the most striking circumstances of which arise so early in its formation, as not to leave him room for a conclusion suitable to the importance of its beginning. After this last interview with the Ghost, the character of Hamlet has lost all its consequence. STEEVENS.

[2] Act IV.] This play is printed in the old editions without any separation of the Acts. The division is modern and arbitrary; and is here not very happy, for the pause is made at a time when there is more continuity of action than in almost any other of the scenes. JOHNSON.

You must translate: 'tis fit we understand them:
Where is your son?

QUEEN. Bestow this place on us a little while [3].—
[*To* ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN, *who go out.*

Ah, my good lord [4], what have I seen to-night!

KING. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

QUEEN. Mad as the sea, and wind, when both contend [5]
Which is the mightier: In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
He whips his rapier out, and cries,* *A rat! a rat!*
And, in this † brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

KING. O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there:
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt [6],

* Quarto, *Whips out his rapier, cries.* † First folio, *his.*

[3] Bestow this place on us a little while.] This line is wanting in the folio. STEEVENS.

Which does not bring Rosencrantz, or Guildenstern, on the stage at all. BOSWELL.

[4] — MY GOOD lord,] The quartos read—"*mine own* lord." STEEVENS.

[5] Mad as the sea, and wind, when both contend, &c.] We have precisely the same image in King Lear, expressed with more brevity:

"—— he was met even now,
"*As mad as the* VEX'D *sea.*" MALONE.

[6] — out of HAUNT,] I would rather read—out of *harm.* JOHNSON.

"Out of haunt," means, *out of company.* So, in Antony and Cleopatra:

"Dido and her Sichæus shall want troops,
"And all the *haunt* be ours."

This mad young man: but, so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit;
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let * it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd:
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore [7],
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

King. O, Gertrude, come away!
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse.—Ho! Guildenstern!

* First folio, *lets*.

Again, in Warner's Albion's England, 1602, b. v. ch. xxvi.:

"And from the smith of heaven's wife allure the amorous *haunt*."

The place where men assemble, is often poetically called the *haunt of men*. So, in Romeo and Juliet:

"We talk here in the publick *haunt* of men." Steevens.

7 — like some ORE,] Shakspeare seems to think *ore* to be *or*, that is, *gold*. Base metals have *ore* no less than precious. Johnson.

Shakspeare uses the general word *ore* to express *gold*, because it was the most excellent of *ores*.—I suppose we should read "*metal* base" instead of *metals*, which much improves the construction of the passage. M. Mason.

He has perhaps used *ore* in the same sense in his Rape of Lucrece:

"When beauty boasted blushes, in despite
"Virtue would stain that *ore* with silver white."

A *mineral* Minsheu defines in his Dictionary, 1617: "Any thing that grows in mines, and *contains metals*." Shakspeare seems to have used the word in this sense,—for *a rude mass of metals*. Malone.

Minerals are *mines*. So, in The Golden Remains of Hales of Eton, 1693, p. 34: "Controversies of the times, like spirits in the *minerals*, with all their labour, nothing is done."

Again, in Hall's Virgidemiarum, lib. vi.:

"Shall it not be a wild fig in a wall,
"Or fired brimstone in a *minerall?*" Steevens.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him:
Go, seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.
[*Exeunt Ros. and* GUIL.
Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done: so, haply, slander [8],—
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank [9],
Transports his poison'd shot,—may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air [1].—O come away!
My soul is full of discord, and dismay. [*Exeunt.*

[8] — so, haply, slander, &c.] Neither these words, nor the following three lines and a half, are in the folio. In the quarto 1604, and all the subsequent quartos, the passage stands thus:

" —— And what's untimely done.
" Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter," &c.

the compositor having omitted the latter part of the first line, as in a former scene, (see p. 355, n. 9,) a circumstance which gives additional strength to an observation made in Antony and Cleopatra, Act V. Sc. I. Mr. Theobald supplied the *lacuna* by reading,—" *For haply* slander," &c. *So*, appears to me to suit the context better; for these lines are rather in apposition with those immediately preceding, than an illation from them. Mr. M. Mason, I find, has made the same observation.

Shakspeare, as Theobald has observed, again expatiates on the diffusive power of slander, in Cymbeline:

" ——— No, 'tis *slander*;
" Whose edge is sharper than the sword, whose tongue
" Out-*venoms* all the worms of Nile, whose breath
" Rides on the posting winds, and doth bely
" All corners of the world." MALONE.

Mr. Malone reads—So *viperous* slander. STEEVENS.

[9] — cannon to his BLANK,] The *blank* was the *white mark* at which shot or arrows were directed. So, in King Lear:

" —— let me still remain
" The true *blank* of thine eye." STEEVENS.

[1] — the WOUNDLESS AIR.] So, in a former scene:

" It is as *the air invulnerable*." MALONE.

SCENE II.

Another Room in the same.

Enter HAMLET.

Ham. —— Safely stowed,—[*Ros. &c. within.* Hamlet! lord Hamlet!] But soft [2],—what noise? who calls on Hamlet? O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ *and* GUILDENSTERN.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust [3], whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis; that we may take it thence,
And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not

[2] —But soft,] I have added these two words from the quarto 1604. STEEVENS.

The folio reads:

"*Ham.* Safely stowed.

"*Ros.* &c. *within.* Hamlet! lord Hamlet!

"*Ham.* What noise," &c.

In the quarto 1604 the speech stands thus:

"*Ham.* Safely stowed; but soft, what noise? who calls on Hamlet?" &c.

I have therefore printed Hamlet's speech unbroken, and inserted that of Rosencrantz, &c. from the folio, before the words, *but soft*, &c. In the modern editions Hamlet is made to take notice of the noise made by the courtiers, before he has heard it. MALONE.

[3] Compounded it with dust,] So, in King Henry IV. P. II.:

"Only *compound* me *with* forgotten *dust*."

Again, in our poet's 71st Sonnet:

"When I perhaps *compounded* am *with clay*." MALONE.

mine own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge! —what replication should be made by the son of a king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end: He keeps them, like an ape [4], in the corner of his jaw: first mouthed, to be last swallowed: When he needs what

4—like an APE,] The quarto has *apple*, which is generally followed. The folio has *ape*, which Sir T. Hanmer has received, and illustrated with the following note:

"It is the way of monkeys in eating, to throw that part of their food, which they take up first, into a pouch they are provided with on each side of their jaw, and there they keep it, till they have done with the rest." JOHNSON.

Surely this should be "like an *ape*, an *apple*." FARMER.

The reading of the folio, *like an ape*, I believe to be the true one, because Shakspeare has the same phraseology in many other places. The word *ape* refers to the King, not to his courtiers. *He keeps them like an ape, in the corner of his jaw*, &c. means, he keeps them, *as* an ape *keeps food*, in the corner of his jaw, &c. So, in King Henry IV. P. I.: "— your chamber-lie breeds fleas *like a loach;*" i. e. as fast as a loach breeds loaches. Again, in King Lear: "They flattered me *like a dog;*" i. e. as a dog fawns upon and flatters his master.

That the particular food in Shakspeare's contemplation was an *apple*, may be inferred from the following passage in The Captain, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"And lie, and kiss my hand unto my mistress,
"As often as *an ape does for an apple*."

I cannot approve of Dr. Farmer's reading. Had our poet meant to introduce both the ape and the apple, he would, I think, have written not *like*, but "*as* an ape an apple."

The two instances above quoted show that any emendation is unnecessary. The reading of the quarto is, however, defensible. MALONE.

Apple in the quarto is a mere typographical error. So, in Peele's Araygnement of Paris, 1584:

"—— you wot it very well
"All that be Dian's maides are vowed to halter *apples* in hell."

The meaning, however, is clearly "as an *ape* does an *apple*." RITSON.

you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again [5].

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear [6].

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

Ham. The body is with the king [7], but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing——

Guil. A thing, my lord?

Ham. Of nothing [8]; bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after [9]. [*Exeunt.*

[5] — and, SPONGE, you shall be dry again.] So, in the 7th Satire of Marston, 1598:

" He's but a *spunge*, and shortly needs must leese
" His wrong-got juice, when greatnes' fist shall *squeese*
" *His liquor out.*" STEEVENS.

[6] — A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.] This, if I mistake not, is a proverbial sentence. MALONE.

Since the appearance of our author's play, these words have become proverbial; but no earlier instance of the idea conveyed by them, has occurred within the compass of my reading. STEEVENS.

[7] The body is with the king,] This answer I do not comprehend. Perhaps it should be,—The body is *not* with the king, for the king is not with the body. JOHNSON.

Perhaps it may mean this,—The body is in the king's house, (i. e. the present king's,) yet the king (i. e. he who should have been king,) is not with the body. Intimating that the usurper is here, the true king in a better place. Or it may mean—*the guilt of the murder lies with the king*, but the king is *not where the body lies*. The affected obscurity of Hamlet must excuse so many attempts to procure something like a meaning. STEEVENS.

[8] OF nothing:] Should it not be read—*Or* nothing? When the courtiers remark that Hamlet has contemptuously called the king a *thing*, Hamlet defends himself by observing, that the king must be a *thing*, or *nothing*. JOHNSON.

The text is right. So, in The Spanish Tragedy:

" In troth, my lord, it is a *thing of nothing*."

And, in one of Harvey's Letters, " a silly bug-beare, a sorry puffe of winde, *a thing of nothing*." FARMER.

So, in Decker's Match Me in London, 1631:

" At what dost thou laugh?
" At *a thing of nothing*, at thee."

SCENE III.

Another Room in the Same.

Enter King, attended.

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.
How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose?
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
And, where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause: Diseases, desperate grown,
By desperate appliance are reliev'd,

Enter Rosencrantz.

Or not at all.—How now? what hath befallen?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

Again, in Look About You, 1600:

"A very little thing, *a thing of nothing*." Steevens.

Mr. Steevens has given [i. e. edit. 1778] many parallelisms: but the origin of all is to be looked for, I believe, in the 144th Psalm, ver. 5: "Man is like *a thing of nought*." Mr. Steevens must have observed, that the Book of Common Prayer, and the translation of the Bible into English, furnished our old writers with many forms of expression, some of which are still in use. Whalley.

9 — Hide fox, &c.] There is a play among children called, *Hide fox, and all after*. Hanmer.

The same sport is alluded to in Decker's Satiromastix: "— our unhandsome-faced poet does play at bo-peep with your grace, and cries—*All hid, as boys do*."

This passage is not in the quarto. Steevens.

King. Bring him before us.
Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

Enter Hamlet and Guildenstern.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?
Ham. At supper.
King. At supper? Where?
Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politick worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else, to fat us; and we fat ourselves for maggots: Your fat king, and your lean beggar, is but variable service; two dishes, but to one table; that's the end.
King. Alas, alas [1]!
Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king; and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.
King. What dost thou mean by this?
Ham. Nothing, but to show you how a king may go a progress [2] through the guts of a beggar.
King. Where is Polonius?
Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i'the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.
King. Go seek him there. [*To some Attendants.*
Ham. He will stay till you come.
[*Exeunt Attendants.*

[1] Alas, alas!] This speech, and the following, are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

[2] — go a PROGRESS —] Alluding to the royal journeys of state, always styled *progresses*; a familiar idea to those who, like our author, lived during the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I. STEEVENS.

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine * especial
safety,—
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee
hence
With fiery quickness [3]: Therefore, prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help [4],
The associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub, that sees them †.—But, come; for England!—Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother: Father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come, for England. [*Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed
aboard;
Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night:
Away; for every thing is seal'd and done
That else leans on the affair: Pray you, make haste.
[*Exeunt Ros. and Guil.*
And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,
(As my great power thereof may give thee sense;

* First folio, *this deed of thine, for thine.* † First folio, *him.*

[3] With fiery quickness:] These words are not in the quartos. We meet with *fiery expedition* in King Richard III. Steevens.

[4] — the wind at HELP,] I suppose it should be read—
"The bark is ready, and the wind at *helm*." Johnson.
"— at *help*," i. e. at hand, ready,—ready to help or assist you. Ritson.
Similar phraseology occurs in Pericles, Prince of Tyre:
"— I'll leave it
"*At* careful nursing." Steevens.

Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us,) thou may'st not coldly set
Our sovereign process [5]; which imports at full,
By letters cónjuring [6] to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;

[5] — thou may'st not coldly SET
Our sovereign process ;] I adhere to the reading of the quarto and folio. Mr. M. Mason observes, that "one of the common acceptations of the verb *set*, is to *value* or *estimate;* as we say to *set* at nought; and in that sense it is used here." STEEVENS.

Our poet has here, I think, as in many other places, used an elliptical expression: "thou may'st not coldly set *by* our sovereign process:" thou may'st not *set little by it*, or estimate it lightly. "To *set by*," Cole renders in his Dict. 1679, by *æstimo*. "*To set little by*," he interprets *parvi-facio*. See many other instances of similar ellipses, in Cymbeline, Act V. Sc. V. MALONE.

[6] By letters CÓNJURING —] Thus the folio. The quarto reads:
"By letters *congruing*—." STEEVENS.

The reading of the folio may derive some support from the following passage in The Hystory of Hamblet, bl. l.: "— making the king of England minister of his massacring resolution; to whom he purposed to send him, [Hamlet,] and by letters *desire* him to put him to death." So also, by a subsequent line:

"*Ham.* Wilt thou know the effect of what I wrote?
"*Hor.* Ay, good my lord.
"*Ham.* An earnest *conjuration* from the king," &c.

The circumstances mentioned as inducing the king to send the prince to England, rather than elsewhere, are likewise found in The Hystory of Hamblet.

Effect was formerly used for *act* or *deed*, simply, and is so used in the line before us. So, in Leo's Historie of Africa, translated by Pory, folio, 1600, p. 253: "Three daies after this *effect*, there came to us a Zuum, that is, a captaine," &c. See also *supra*, p. 399, n. 2.

The verb to *conjure* (in the sense of to *supplicate*,) was formerly accented on the first syllable. So, in Macbeth:

"I *cónjure* you, by that which you profess.
"Howe'er you come to know it, answer me.

Again, in King John:

"I *cónjure* thee but slowly; run more fast."

Again, in Romeo and Juliet:

"I *cónjure* thee, by Rosaline's bright eyes —."

Again, in Measure for Measure:

"O prince, I *cónjure* thee, as thou believ'st," &c. MALONE.

For like the hectick in my blood he rages [7],
And thou must cure me: Till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys will ne'er begin [8]. [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

A Plain in Denmark.

Enter FORTINBRAS, *and Forces, marching.*

For. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;
Tell him, that, by his licence, Fortinbras
Craves [9] the conveyance of a promis'd march

7 — like the hectick in my blood he rages,] So, in Love's Labour's Lost:

" I would forget her, but a *fever*, she
" *Reigns in my blood.*" MALONE.

Scaliger has a parallel sentiment:—" Febris hectica uxor, et non nisi morte avellenda." STEEVENS.

8 Howe'er my haps, my joys WILL ne'er BEGIN.] This being the termination of a scene, should, according to our author's custom, be rhymed. Perhaps he wrote:

' Howe'er my *hopes*, my joys *are not begun*.'

If *haps* be retained, the meaning will be, *'till I know 'tis done, I shall be miserable*, whatever befal me. JOHNSON.

The folio reads, in support of Dr. Johnson's remark:

" Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er *begun*."

Mr. Heath would read:

" Howe'er *'t may hap*, my joys will ne'er begin."

STEEVENS.

By his *haps*, he means his *successes*. His fortune was begun, but his joys were not. M. MASON.

" Howe'er my haps, my joys *will* ne'er *begin*." This is the reading of the quarto. The folio, for the sake of rhyme, reads:

" Howe'er my haps, my joys *were* ne'er *begun*."

But this, I think, the poet could not have written. The King is speaking of the future time. To say, till I *shall be* informed that a certain act *has been* done, whatever may befal me, my joys never *had* a beginning, is surely nonsense. MALONE.

9 Craves —] Thus the quartos. The folio—*Claims*.

STEEVENS.

Claims agrees better with *promise*. BOSWELL.

Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye [1],
And let him know so.

Cap. I will do't, my lord.

For. Go softly * on.

[*Exeunt Fortinbras and Forces.*

Enter Hamlet, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, &c.

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these [2]?

Cap. They are of Norway, sir.

Ham. How purpos'd, sir, I pray you?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who Commands them, sir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir, Or for some frontier?

Cap. Truly to speak, sir, and with no addition, We go to gain a little patch of ground, That hath in it no profit but the name. To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it; Nor will it yield to Norway, or the Pole, A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

* First folio, *safely*.

[1] We shall express our duty IN HIS EYE,] So, in Antony and Cleopatra:

" ——— tended her *i' the eyes*."

In his eye, means, 'in his presence.' The phrase appears to have been formularly. See The Establishment of the Household of Prince Henry, A. D. 1610: "Also the gentleman-usher shall be careful to see and informe all such as doe service *in the Prince's eye*, that they perform their dutyes," &c. Again, in The Regulations for the Government of the Queen's Household, 1627: " ——— all such as doe service *in the Queen's eye*." STEEVENS.

[2] Good sir, &c.] The remaining part of this scene is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.
Cap. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.
Ham. Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand ducats,
Will not debate the question of this straw:
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace;
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies.—I humbly thank you, sir.
Cap. God be wi'you, sir. [*Exit Captain.*
Ros. Will't please you go, my lord?
Ham. I will be with you straight. Go a little before. [*Exeunt Ros. and Guil.*
How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his chief good, and market of his time [3],
Be but to sleep, and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, he, that made us with such large discourse [4],
Looking before, and after, gave us not
That capability and godlike reason
To fust in us unus'd. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple [5]
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom,
And, ever, three parts coward,—I do not know
Why yet I live to say, *This thing's to do;*
Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means,

[3] — chief good, and market of his time, &c.] If his highest good, and *that for which he sells his time*, be to sleep and feed. JOHNSON.

Market, I think, here means *profit*. MALONE.

[4] — large DISCOURSE,] Such latitude of comprehension, such power of reviewing the past, and anticipating the future. JOHNSON.

[5] — some CRAVEN scruple —] Some *cowardly* scruple. A *craven* is a *mean spirited cock*. So, in The Taming of a Shrew:
"No cock of mine, you crow too like a *craven*." MALONE.
So, in King Henry VI. Part I.:
"Or durst not, for his *craven* heart, say this." STEEVENS.

To do't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me:
Witness, this army of such mass, and charge,
Led by a delicate and tender prince;
Whose spirit, with divine ambition puff'd,
Makes mouths at the invisible event;
Exposing what is mortal, and unsure,
To all that fortune, death, and danger, dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great,
Is, not to stir without great argument [6];
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason, and my blood [7],
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That, for a fantasy, and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds; fight for a plot [8]
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,

[6] — Rightly to be great,
Is, not to stir without, &c.] This passage I have printed according to the copy. Mr. Theobald had regulated it thus:

" —— 'Tis not to be great,
" Never to stir without great argument;
" But greatly," &c.

The sentiment of Shakspeare is partly just, and partly romantick.

" —— Rightly to be great,
" Is, not to stir without great argument;"

is exactly philosophical.

" But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
" When honour's at the stake;"

is the idea of a modern hero. *But then*, says he, *honour is an argument, or subject of debate, sufficiently* great, *and* when honour is at stake, we must *find cause of quarrel in a straw.* JOHNSON.

[7] Excitements of my reason, and my blood,] Provocations which excite both my reason and my passions to vengeance. JOHNSON.

[8] — a plot.] A piece, or portion. REED.
So, in The Mirror for Magistrates:

" Of grounde to win *a plot*, a while to dwell,
" We venture lives, and send our souls to hell."

HENDERSON.

Which is not tomb enough, and continent [9],
To hide the slain?—O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!

[*Exit.*

SCENE V.

Elsinore. A Room in the Castle.

Enter Queen and HORATIO.

Queen. —— I will not speak with her.

Hor. She is importunate; indeed, distract;
Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have?

Hor. She speaks much of her father; says, she hears,
There's tricks i'the world; and hems, and beats her heart;
Spurns enviously at straws [1]; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,

[9] — continent,] *Continent*, in our author, means that which comprehends or encloses. So, in King Lear:

"Rive your concealing *continents*."

Again, in Chapman's version of the third Iliad:

"—————— did take
"Thy fair form for a *continent* of parts as fair."

See King Lear, Act III. Sc. II. STEEVENS.

Again, Lord Bacon, On the Advancement of Learning, 4to. 1633, p. 7: "— if there be no fulnesse, then is the *continent* greater than the content." REED.

[1] Spurns ENVIOUSLY at straws;] *Envy* is much oftener put by our poet (and those of his time) for direct *aversion*, than for *malignity conceived at the sight of another's excellence or happiness*.

So, in King Henry VIII.:

"You turn the good we offer into *envy*."

Again, in God's Revenge against Murder, 1621, Hist. VI.—"She loves the memory of Sypontus, and *envies* and detests that of her two husbands." STEEVENS.

Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection [2]; they aim at it [3],
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;
Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,
Indeed would make one think, there might * be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily [4].

Queen. 'Twere good, she were spoken with [5]; for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds:

* First folio, *would*.

[2] — to COLLECTION;] i. e. to deduce consequences from such premises; or, as Mr. M. Mason observes, "endeavour to collect some meaning from them." So, in Cymbeline, scene the last:

"——whose containing
"Is so from sense to hardness, that I can
"Make no *collection* of it."

See the note on this passage. STEEVENS.

[3] — they AIM at it,] The quartos read—they *yawn* at it. To *aim* is to *guess*. So, in Romeo and Juliet:

"I *aim'd* so near, when I suppos'd you lov'd." STEEVENS.

[4] Though nothing sure, yet much UNHAPPILY.] i. e. though her meaning cannot be certainly collected, yet there is enough to put a mischievous interpretation to it. WARBURTON.

That *unhappy* once signified *mischievous*, may be known from P. Holland's translation of Pliny's Natural History, book xix. ch. vii.: "—the shrewd and *unhappie* soules which lie upon the lands, and eat up the seed new sowne." We still use *unlucky* in the same sense. STEEVENS.

[5] 'Twere good, she were spoken with;] These lines are given to the Queen in the folio, and to Horatio in the quarto. JOHNSON.

I think the two first lines of Horatio's speech ['Twere good, &c.] belong to him; the rest to the Queen. BLACKSTONE.

In the quarto, the Queen, Horatio, and a Gentleman, enter at the beginning of this scene. The two speeches, "She is importunate," &c. and "She speaks much of her father," &c are there given to the Gentleman, and the line now before us, as well as the two following, to Horatio: the remainder of this speech to the Queen. I think it probable that the regulation proposed by Sir W. Blackstone was that intended by Shakspeare. MALONE.

Let her come in. [*Exit* HORATIO.
To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss[6]:
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter HORATIO, *with* OPHELIA.

OPH. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

QUEEN. How now, Ophelia?

OPH. How should I your true love know[7]
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon[8]. [Singing.

[6] — to some great AMISS;] Shakspeare is not singular in his use of this word as a substantive. So, in The Arraignment of Paris, 1584:

"Gracious forbearers of this world's *amiss.*"

Again, in Lyly's Woman in the Moon, 1597:

"Pale be my looks, to witness my *amiss.*"

Again, in Greene's Disputation between a He Coney-catcher, &c. 1592: "revive in them the memory of my *great amiss.*" STEEVENS.

Each *toy* is, each *trifle*. MALONE.

[7] *How should I your true love*, &c.] There is no part of this play in its representation on the stage, more pathetick than this scene; which, I suppose, proceeds from the utter insensibility Ophelia has to her own misfortunes.

A great sensibility, or none at all, seems to produce the same effect. In the latter the audience supply what she wants, and with the former they sympathize. SIR J. REYNOLDS.

[8] *By his cockle hat and staff,*
And his sandal shoon.] This is the description of a pilgrim. While this kind of devotion was in favour, love intrigues were carried on under that mask. Hence the old ballads and novels made pilgrimages the subjects of their plots. The cockle-shell hat was one of the essential badges of this vocation: for the chief places of devotion being beyond sea, or on the coasts, the pilgrims were accustomed to put cockle-shells upon their hats, to denote the intention or performance of their devotion.

WARBURTON.

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?
Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

He is dead and gone, lady, [Sings.
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

O, ho!

Queen. Nay, but Ophelia,——
Oph. Pray you, mark.

White his shroud as the mountain snow,
[Sings.

Enter King.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.
Oph. *Larded all with sweet flowers*[9];
*Which bewept to the grave * did go*[1],
With true-love showers.

King. How do you, pretty lady?
Oph. Well, God'ield you[2]! They say, the owl

* Quarto, *ground.*

So, in Green's Never too Late, 1616:

"A hat of straw like to a swain,
"Shelter for the sun and rain,
"With a *scallop-shell* before," &c.

Again, in The Old Wives Tale, by George Peele, 1595: "I will give thee a palmer's *staff* of yvorie, and a *scallop-shell* of beaten gold." Steevens.

9 Larded *all with sweet flowers;*] The expression is taken from cookery. Johnson.

1 —*did go,*] The old editions read—did *not* go. Corrected by Mr. Pope. Steevens.

2 Well, God'ield you!] i. e. Heaven reward you! So, in Antony and Cleopatra:

"Tend me to-night two hours, I ask no more,
"And the *Gods yield you* for't!"

So, Sir John Grey, in a letter in Ashmole's Appendix to his Account of the Garter, Numb. 46: "The king of his gracious lordshipe, *God yeld* him, hafe chosen me to be owne of his brethrene of the knyghts of the garter." Theobald.

See Macbeth, Act I. Sc. VI. Steevens.

was a baker's daughter [3]. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray*, let us have no words of this; but when they ask you, what it means, say you this:

To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day [4],
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine:

* First folio, *Pray you.*

[3] — the owl was a baker's daughter.] This was a metamorphosis of the common people, arising from the mealy appearance of the owl's feathers, and her guarding the bread from mice.

WARBURTON.

To guard the *bread* from mice, is rather the office of a *cat* than an *owl*. In barns and granaries, indeed, the services of the *owl* are still acknowledged. This was, however, no "metamorphosis of the common people," but a legendary story, which both Dr. Johnson and myself have read, yet in what book at least I cannot recollect.—Our Saviour being refused bread by the *daughter of a baker*, is described as punishing her by turning her into an *owl*.

STEEVENS.

This is a common story among the vulgar in Gloucestershire, and is thus related: "Our Saviour went into a baker's shop where they were baking, and asked for some bread to eat. The mistress of the shop immediately put a piece of dough into the oven to bake for him; but was reprimanded by her daughter, who insisting that the piece of dough was too large, reduced it to a very small size. The dough, however, immediately afterwards began to swell, and presently became of a most enormous size. Whereupon, the baker's daughter cried out 'Heugh, heugh, heugh,' which owl-like noise probably induced our Saviour for her wickedness to transform her into that bird." This story is often related to children, in order to deter them from such illiberal behaviour to poor people. DOUCE.

[4] GOOD *morrow*, 'TIS *Saint* VALENTINE'S *day*,] Old copies:

"*To*-morrow *is*," &c.

The correction is Dr. Farmer's. STEEVENS.

There is a rural tradition that about this time of year birds choose their mates. Bourne, in his Antiquities of the Common People, observes, that "it is a ceremony never omitted among the

Then up he rose, and don'd his clothes [5],
And dupp'd the chamber door [6];
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed *, without an oath, I'll make an end on't:

By Gis [7], *and by Saint Charity* [8],
Alack, and fye for shame!

* First folio, *Indeed la!*

vulgar, to draw lots, which they term *Valentines*, on the *eve* before Valentine-day. The names of a select number of one sex are by an equal number of the other put into some vessel; and after that every one draws a name, which for the present is called their *Valentine*, and is also look'd upon as a good omen of their being man and wife afterwards." Mr. Brand adds, that he has "searched the legend of St. Valentine, but thinks there is no occurrence in his life, that could give rise to this ceremony." Malone.

[5] — don'd *his clothes*,] To *don*, is to *do on*, to put on, as *doff* is to *do off*, put off. Steevens.

[6] *And* dupp'd *the chamber door*;] To *dup*, is to *do up*; to lift the latch. It were easy to write—And *op'd*. Johnson.

To *dup*, was a common contraction of to *do up*. So, in Damon and Pythias, 1582: "—the porters are drunk; will they not *dup* the gate to-day?"

Lord Surrey, in his translation of the second Æneid, renders *Panduntur portæ, &c.*

"The gates *cast up*, we issued out to play."

The phrase seems to have been adopted either from *doing up* the *latch*, or drawing up the *portcullis*. So, in the ancient MS. romance of The Sowdon of Babyloyne, p. 40:

"To the prison she hyed her swyth,
"The *prison dore up she doth*."

Again, in The Cooke's Play, in the Chester collection of mysteries, MS. Harl. 1013, p. 140:

"*Open up* hell-gates anon."

It appears from Martin Mark-all's Apologie to the Bel-man of London, 1610, that in the cant of gypsies, &c. *Dup the gigger*, signified *to open the doore*. Steevens.

[7] *By* Gis,] I rather imagine it should be read:

By *Cis*, ———

That is, by St. Cecily. Johnson.

See the second paragraph of the next note. Steevens.

Young men will do't, if they come to't;
By cock[9], *they are to blame.*

[8] —*by* SAINT CHARITY,] *Saint Charity* is a known saint among the Roman Catholics. Spenser mentions her, Eclog. v. 255:

"Ah dear lord, and sweet *Saint Charity!*"

Again, in The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington, 1601:

"Therefore, sweet master, for *Saint Charity*."

Again, in A lytell Geste of Robyn Hode:

"Lete me go, then sayd the sheryf,
"For *saint Charytè* —."

Again, *ibid.*:

"Gyve us some of your spendynge,
"For *saynt Charytè*."

I find, *by Gisse*, used as an adjuration, both by Gascoigne in his Poems, by Preston in his Cambyses, and in the comedy of See Me and See Me Not, 1618:

"By *Gisse* I swear, were I so fairly wed," &c.

Again, in King Edward III. 1599:

"By *Gis*, fair lords, ere many daies be past," &c.

Again, in Heywood's 23d Epigram, Fourth Hundred:

"Nay, by *Gis*, he looketh on you maister, quoth he."

STEEVENS.

Mr. Steevens's first assertion, though disputed by a catholick friend, can be supported by infallible authority. "We read," says Dr. Douglas, "in the martyrology on the first of August—'Romæ passio sanctarum virginum, Fidei, Spei, et *Charitatis*, quæ sub Hadriano principe martyriæ coronam adeptæ sunt.'"

Criterion, p. 68. RITSON.

In the scene between the Bastard Faulconbridge and the friars and nunne, in the First Part of The Troublesome Raigne of King John, (edit. 1779, p. 256, &c.) "the nunne swears *by Gis*, and the friers pray to *Saint Withold* (another obsolete saint mentioned in King Lear,) and adjure him by *Saint Charitie* to hear them."

BLACKSTONE.

"*By Gis*." There is not the least mention of any saint whose name corresponds with this, either in the Roman Calendar, the service in *Usum Sarum*, or in the Benedictionary of Bishop Athelwold. I believe the word to be only a corrupted abbreviation of *Jesus*, the letters J. H. S. being anciently all that was set down to denote that sacred name, on altars, the covers of books, &c. RIDLEY.

Though *Gis* may be, and I believe is, only a contraction of *Jesus*, there is certainly a Saint *Gislen*, with whose name it corresponds. RITSON.

[9] *By* COCK,] This is likewise a corruption of the sacred name.

Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promis'd me to wed:

[He answers[1].]

So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed.

King. How long hath she been thus * ?

Oph. I hope, all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think, they should † lay him i'the cold ground: My brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies[3]; good night, sweet ladies: good night, good night.

[*Exit.*

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. [*Exit Horatio.*

O! this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death: And now behold,
O Gertrude, Gertrude,
When sorrows come[4], they come not single spies,
But in battalions! First, her father slain;
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: The people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,

* First folio, *this*. † Quarto, *would*.

Many instances of it are given in a note at the beginning of the fifth Act of The Second Part of King Henry IV. Steevens.

[1] [He answers.] These words I have added from the quartos. Steevens.

[2] Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; &c.] In Marlowe's Tamburlaine, 1590, Zabina in her frenzy uses the same expression: "Hell, *make ready my coach*, my chair, my jewels, I *come*, I *come*." Malone.

[3] When sorrows come, &c.] In Ray's Proverbs we find, "Misfortunes seldom come alone," as a proverbial phrase. Reed.

For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly[4],
In hugger-mugger to inter him[5]: Poor Ophelia
Divided from herself, and her fair judgment;
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts.
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France:
Feeds on his wonder[6], keeps himself in clouds,

4 — but GREENLY,] But *unskilfully*; with *greenness*; that is, without *maturity* of judgment. JOHNSON.

5 In HUGGER-MUGGER to inter him:] All the modern editions that I have consulted, give it:

"In *private* to inter him—."

That the words now replaced are better, I do not undertake to prove: it is sufficient that they are Shakspeare's: if phraseology is to be changed as words grow uncouth by disuse, or gross by vulgarity, the history of every language will be lost: we shall no longer have the words of any author; and, as these alterations will be often unskilfully made, we shall in time have very little of his meaning. JOHNSON.

On this just observation I ground the restoration of a gross and unpleasing word in a preceding passage, for which Mr. Pope substituted *groan*. See p. 326, n. 9. The alteration in the present instance was made by the same editor. MALONE.

This expression is used in The Revenger's Tragedy, 1609:

"—— he died like a politician,
"In *hugger-mugger*."

Again, in Harrington's Ariosto:

"So that it might be done in *hugger-mugger*."

Shakspeare probably took the expression from the following passage in Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch:—"Antonius thinking that his body should be honourably buried, and not in *hugger-mugger*."

It appears from Greene's Groundwork of Coneycatching, 1592, that *to hugger* was to *lurk about*. STEEVENS.

The meaning of the expression is ascertained by Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: "*Dinascoso*; secretly, hiddenly, *in hugger-mugger*." MALONE.

6 FEEDS on his wonder,] The folio reads—

"*Keeps* on his wonder——."

The quarto—

"*Feeds* on *this* wonder——."

And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd [7],
Will nothing stick our person * to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murdering piece [8], in many places

* First folio, *persons*.

Thus the true reading is picked out from between them. Sir T. Hanmer reads unnecessarily—

"*Feeds* on his *anger* ——." JOHNSON.

7 Wherein necessity, &c.] Sir T. Hanmer reads:

"*Whence animosity* of matter beggar'd."

He seems not to have understood the connection. 'Wherein, that is, in which pestilent speeches, necessity, or the obligation of an accuser to support his charge, will nothing stick,' &c. JOHNSON.

8 Like to a MURDERING piece,] Such a piece as assassins use, with many barrels. It is necessary to apprehend this, to see the justness of the similitude. WARBURTON.

The same term occurs in a passage in The Double Marriage of Beaumont and Fletcher:

"And, like a *murdering piece*, aims not at one,
"But all that stand within the dangerous level."

Again, in All's Lost by Lust, a tragedy by Rowley, 1633:

"If thou fail'st too, the king comes with a *murdering piece*,
"In the rear."

Again, in A Fair Quarrel, by Middleton and Rowley, 1622:

"There is not such another *murdering piece*
"In all the stock of calumny."

It appears from a passage in Smith's Sea Grammar, 1627, that it was a piece of ordnance used in ships of war: "A case shot is any kinde of small bullets, nailes, old iron, or the like, to put into the case, to shoot out of the ordnances or *murderers*; these will doe much mischiefe," &c. STEEVENS.

A *murdering piece* was the specifick term in Shakspeare's time for a piece of ordnance, or small cannon.

So, in Smith's History of New England, fol. 1630, b. vi. p. 223: "Strange they thought it, that a barke of threescore tunnes with foure guns should stand on such termes, they being eighteen expert sea-men in an excellent ship of one hundred and fortie tuns, and thirty-six cast pieces, and *murderers*." The word is found in Cole's Latin Dictionary, 1679, and rendered, "*tormentum murale*."

The small cannon, which are, or were used in the forecastle, half-deck, or steerage of a ship of war, were within this century called *murdering pieces*. MALONE.

Gives me superfluous death! [*A noise within.*
QUEEN. Alack! what noise is this[9]?

Enter a Gentleman.

KING. Attend.
Where are my Switzers[1]? Let them guard the door:
What is the matter?
GENT. Save yourself, my lord;
The ocean, overpeering of his list[2],
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,

Perhaps what is now, from the manner of it, called a *swivel*. It is mentioned in Sir T. Roes Voiage to the East Indies, at the end of Della Valle's Travels, 1665: "—the East India company had a very little pinnace. . . .mann'd she was with ten men, and had only one small *murdering-piece* within her." Probably it was never charged with a single ball, but always with shot, pieces of old iron, &c. RITSON.

9 Alack! &c.] This speech of the Queen is omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

1 —my SWITZERS?] I have observed in many of our old plays, that the guards attendant on Kings are called *Switzers*, and that without any regard to the country where the scene lies. Thus, in Beaumont and Fletcher's Noble Gentleman, Act III. Sc. I.:

"———was it not
"Some place of gain, as clerk to the great band
"Of marrow-bones, that the people call the *Switzers?*
"Men made of beef and sarcenet?" REED.

The reason is, because the Swiss in the time of our poet, as at present, were hired to fight the battles of other nations. So, in Nashe's Christ's Teares over Jerusalem, 4to. 1594: "Law, logicke, and the *Switzers*, may be hired to fight for any body." MALONE.

2 The ocean, overpeering of his LIST,] The *lists* are the barriers which the spectators of a tournament must not pass. JOHNSON.

See note on Othello, Act IV. Sc. I. STEEVENS.

List, in this place, only signifies *boundary*, i. e. the shore So, in King Henry IV. Part II.:

"The very *list*, the very utmost bound
"Of all our fortunes."

The *selvage* of cloth was in both places, I believe, in our author's thoughts. MALONE.

O'erbears your officers! The rabble call him, lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word [3],
They cry, *Choose we; Laertes shall be king!*
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs [4].

[3] The ratifiers and props of every WORD,] By *word* is here meant *a declaration*, or proposal. It is determined to this sense, by the inference it hath to what had just preceded:

"The rabble call him lord," &c.

This acclamation, which is the *word* here spoken of, was made without regard to antiquity, or received custom, whose concurrence, however, is necessarily required to confer validity and stability in every proposal of this kind. HEATH.

Sir T. Hanmer would transpose this line and the next. Dr. Warburton proposes to read, *ward;* and Dr. Johnson, *weal*, instead of *word*. I should be rather for reading, *work*.

TYRWHITT.

In the first folio there is only a comma at the end of the above line; and will not the passage bear this construction?—The rabble call him lord, and as if the world were now but to begin, and as if the ancient custom of hereditary succession were unknown, they, the ratifiers and props of *every word he utters*, cry,—Let us make choice, that Laertes shall be king. TOLLET.

This *construction* might certainly be admitted, and *the ratifiers and props of every word* might be understood to be applied to the *rabble* mentioned in a preceding line, without Sir T. Hanmer's transposition of this and the following line; but there is no authority for what Mr. Tollet adds, "of every word *he* [Laertes] *utters*," for the poet has not described Laertes as having uttered a word. If, therefore, the rabble are called *the ratifiers and props of every word*, we must understand, "of every word *uttered by themselves:*" which is so tame that it would be unjust to our poet to suppose that to have been his meaning. *Ratifiers*, &c. refer not to the people, but to *custom* and *antiquity*, which the speaker says are the true ratifiers and props of every word. The last word however of the line may well be suspected to be corrupt; and Mr. Tyrwhitt has probably suggested the true reading.

MALONE.

[4] O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs.] Hounds run *counter* when they trace the trail backwards. JOHNSON.

KING. The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*

Enter LAERTES, *armed; Danes following.*

LAER. Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you all without.

DAN. No, let's come in.

LAER. I pray you, give me leave.

DAN. We will, we will.

[*They retire without the Door.*

LAER. I thank you:—keep the door.—O thou vile king,
Give me my father.

QUEEN. Calmly, good Laertes.

LAER. That drop of blood, that's calm *, proclaims me bastard;
Cries, cuckold, to my father; brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow [4]
Of my true mother.

KING. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?—
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person;
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will [5].—Tell me, Laertes,

* First folio, *that calms*.

[4] — UNSMIRCHED brow,] i. e. clean, not defiled. To *besmirch*, our author uses, Act I. Sc. V. and again in King Henry V. Act IV. Sc. III.

[5] This seems to be an allusion to a proverb often introduced in the old comedies. Thus, in The London Prodigal, 1605: "— as true as the skin between any man's *brows*."

The same phrase is also found in Much Ado About Nothing, Act III. Sc. V. STEEVENS.

[5] Acts little of his will.—] We may illustrate this passage by an anecdote of Queen Elizabeth, related in Englandes Mourning Garment, by Henry Chettle. While her Majesty was on the river, near Greenwich, a shot was fired by accident, which struck the royal barge, and hurt a waterman near her. "The French ambassador being amazed, and all crying Treason, Treason! yet

Why thou art thus incens'd;—Let him go, Gertrude;—
Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience, and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation: To this point I stand,—
That both the worlds I give to negligence [6],
Let come what comes; only I'll be reveng'd
Most throughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will, not all the world's *:
And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge,
That, sweepstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?

Laer. None but his enemies.

* First folio, *world*.

she, with an undaunted spirit, came to the open place of the barge, and bad them never feare, for if the shot were made at her, they durst not shoote againe: such majestie had her presence, and such boldnesse her heart, that she despised all feare; and was as all princes are, or should be; so full of divine fullnesse, that guiltie mortalitie durst not beholde her but with dazeled eyes."

Boswell.

[6] That BOTH THE WORLDS I give to negligence,] So, in Macbeth:

"But let the frame of things disjoint, *both the worlds* suffer."

Steevens.

King. Will you know them then?
Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms;
And, like the kind life-rend'ring pelican * [7],
Repast them with my blood.
King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child, and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly [8] in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment 'pear [9],
As day does to your eye.
Danes. [*Within.*] Let her come in.
Laer. How now! what noise is that?

Enter Ophelia, *fantastically dressed with Straws and Flowers.*

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,

* First folio, *politician*.

7 — life-rend'ring PELICAN,] So, in the ancient Interlude of Nature, bl. l. no date:

"Who taught the cok hys watche-howres to observe,
"And syng of corage wyth shryll throte on hye?
"Who taught the *pellycan* her tender hart to carve?—
"For she nolde suffer her byrdys to dye?"

Again, in the play of King Leir, 1605:

"I am as kind as is the *pelican*,
"That kils itselfe, to save her young ones lives."

It is almost needless to add that this account of the bird is entirely fabulous. STEEVENS.

8 — most SENSIBLY —] Thus the quarto 1604. The folio, following the error of a later quarto, reads—most *sensible*. MALONE.

9 — to your judgment 'PEAR,] So the quarto. The folio, and all the later editions, read:

"——— to your judgment *pierce*,"

less intelligibly. JOHNSON.

This elision of the verb to *appear*, is common to Beaumont and Fletcher. So, in The Maid in the Mill:

"They '*pear* so handsomely, I will go forward."

Again:

"And where they '*pear* so excellent in little,
"They will but flame in great." STEEVENS.

Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid with * weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—
O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love: and, where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves [1].

Oph. *They bore him barefac'd on the bier [2];*
Hey no nonny, nonny hey nonny [3]:
And in his grave rain'd many a tear;—

* First folio, *by*.

[1] Nature is FINE in love: and, where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.] These lines are not in the quarto, and might have been omitted in the folio without great loss, for they are obscure and affected; but, I think, they require no emendation. *Love* (says Laertes) is the passion by which *nature is most* exalted and *refined;* and as substances, *refined* and subtilised, easily obey any impulse, or follow any attraction, some part of nature, so purified and *refined*, flies off after the attracting object, after the thing it loves:

" As into air the purer spirits flow,
" And separate from their kindred dregs below,
" So flew her soul." JOHNSON.

The meaning of the passage may be—That her wits, like the spirit of fine essences, flew off or evaporated. *Fine*, however, sometimes signifies *artful*. So, in All's Well that Ends Well: " Thou art too *fine* in thy evidence." STEEVENS.

[2] *They bore him barefac'd on the bier;* &c.] So, in Chaucer's Knighte's Tale, Mr. Tyrwhitt's edit. ver. 2879:

" He laid him bare the visage on the bere,
" Therwith he wept that pitee was to here." STEEVENS.

[3] *Hey no nonny*, &c.] These words, which were the burthen of a song, are found only in the folio. See King Lear, Act III. Sc. III. MALONE.

These words are also found in old John Heywood's Play of The Wether:

" Gyve boys wether, quoth a *nonny nonny*."

I am informed, that among the common people in Norfolk, to *nonny* signifies to *trifle* or *play with*. STEEVENS.

Fare you well, my dove!

LAER. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

OPH. You must sing, *Down a-down*[4], *an you call him a-down-a.* O, how the wheel becomes it[5]! It is the false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

[4] —sing, DOWN A-DOWN,] Perhaps Shakspeare alludes to Phœbe's Sonnet, by Thomas Lodge, which the reader may find in England's Helicon, 1600:

" *Downe a-downe,*
" Thus Phillis sung,
" By fancie once distressed: &c.
" And so sing I, with *downe a-downe,*" &c.

Down a-down is likewise the burthen of a song in The Three Ladies of London, 1584, and perhaps common to many others.

STEEVENS.

See Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: " *Filibustacchina,* The burden of a countrie song; as we say, *Hay doune a doune, douna.*

MALONE.

[5] O, how the WHEEL becomes it! &c.] The story alluded to I do not know; but perhaps the lady stolen by the steward was reduced to *spin.* JOHNSON.

The *wheel* may mean no more than *the burthen of the song,* which she had just repeated, and as such was formerly used. I met with the following observation in an old quarto black-letter book, published before the time of Shakspeare:

" The song was accounted a good one, thogh it was not moche graced by the *wheele* which in no wise accorded with the subject matter thereof."

I quote this from memory, and from a book, of which I cannot recollect the exact title or date; but the passage was in a preface to some songs or sonnets. I well remember, to have met with the word in the same sense in other old books.

Rota, indeed, as I am informed, is the ancient musical term in Latin, for the burden of a song. Dr. Farmer, however, has just favoured me with a quotation from Nicholas Breton's Toyes of an Idle Head, 1577, which at once explains the word *wheel* in the sense for which I have contended:

" That I may sing, full merrily,
" Not heigh ho *wele,* but care away!"

i. e. not with a melancholy, but a cheerful burthen.

I formerly supposed that the ballad alluded to by Ophelia, was that entered on the books of the Stationers' Company: " Octo-

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts[6].

ber 1580. Four ballades of the Lord of Lorn and the False Steward," &c. but Mr. Ritson assures me there is no corresponding *theft* in it. Steevens.

I am inclined to think that *wheel* is here used in its ordinary sense, and that these words allude to the occupation of the girl who is supposed to sing the song alluded to by Ophelia.—The following lines in Hall's Virgidemiarum, 1597, appear to me to add some support to this interpretation:

"Some drunken rimer thinks his time well spent,
"If he can live to see his name in print;
"Who when he is once fleshed to the presse,
"And sees his handselle have such fair successe,
"*Sung to the wheele*, and sung unto the payle,
"He sends forth thraves of *ballads* to the sale."

So, in Sir Thomas Overbury's Characters, 1614: "She makes her hands hard with labour, and her head soft with pittie; and when winter evenings fall early, sitting at her merry *wheele*, she sings a defiance to the giddy wheele of fortune."

Our author likewise furnishes an authority to the same purpose. Twelfth Night, Act II. Sc. IV.:

"——Come, the *song* we had last night:
"The *spinsters* and the knitters in the sun,—
"Do use to *chaunt* it."

A musical antiquary may perhaps contend, that the controverted words of the text allude to an ancient instrument mentioned by Chaucer, and called by him a *rote*, by others a *vielle;* which was played upon by the friction of a *wheel*. Malone.

[6] There's rosemary, that's for remembrance;—and there is pansies, that's for thoughts.] There is probably some mythology in the choice of these herbs, but I cannot explain it. *Pansies* is for *thoughts*, because of its name, *Pensees;* but why *rosemary* indicates *remembrance*, except that it is an ever-green, and carried at funerals, I have not discovered. Johnson.

So, in All Fools, a comedy, by Chapman, 1605:

"What flowers are these?
"The *pansie* this.
"O, that's for lovers' *thoughts!*"

Rosemary was anciently supposed to strengthan the memory, and was not only carried at funerals, but worn at weddings, as appears from a passage in Beaumont and Fletcher's Elder Brother, Act III. Sc. III.

Laer. A document in madness; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines[7]:

And from another in Ram Alley, or Merry Tricks, 1611:

"——will I be *wed* this morning,
"Thou shalt not be there, nor once be graced with
"A piece of *rosemary*."

Again, in The Noble Spanish Soldier, 1634: "I meet few but are stuck with *rosemary:* every one asked me who was to be *married*."

Again, in Greene's Never too Late, 1616: "—she hath given thee a nosegay of flowers, wherein, as a top-gallant for all the rest, is set in *rosemary for remembrance*."

Again, in A Dialogue between Nature and the Phœnix, by R. Chester, 1601:

"There's *rosemarie;* the Arabians justifie
"(Physitions of exceeding perfect skill)
"It comforteth the braine and *memorie*," &c. Steevens.

Rosemary being supposed to strengthen the memory, was the emblem of fidelity in lovers. So, in A Handfull of Pleasant Delites, containing Sundrie New Sonets, 16mo. 1584:

"*Rosemary* is *for remembrance*
"Betweene us daie and night;
"Wishing that I might alwaies have
"You present in my sight."

The poem in which these lines are found, is entitled A Nosegaie alwaies Sweet for Lovers to send for Tokens of Love, &c. Malone.

[7] There's FENNEL for you, and COLUMBINES:] Greene, in his Quip for an Upstart Courtier, 1620, calls *fennel, women's weeds:* "fit generally for that sex, sith while they are maidens, they wish wantonly."

Among Turbervile's Epitaphes, &c. p. 42, b. I likewise find the following mention of *fennel:*

"Your *fennell* did declare
"(As simple men can shewe)
"That flattrie in my breast I bare,
"Where friendship ought to grow."

I know not of what *columbines* were supposed to be emblematical. They are again mentioned in All Fools, by Chapman, 1605:

"What's that?—a *columbine?*
"No: that *thankless* flower grows not in my garden."

Gerard, however, and other herbalists, impute few, if any, virtues to them; and they may therefore be styled *thankless*, because they appear to make no grateful return for their creation.

—there's rue for you; and here's some for me:—
we may call it, herb of grace o'Sundays[8]:—you

Again, in the 15th Song of Drayton's Polyolbion:

"The *columbine* amongst, they sparingly do set."

From the Caltha Poetarum, 1599, it should seem as if this flower was the emblem of cuckoldom:

"—— the blue *cornuted* columbine,
"Like to the crooked horns of Acheloy." STEEVENS.

Columbine was an emblem of cuckoldom on account of the horns of its nectaria, which are remarkable in this plant. See Aquilegia, in Linnæus's Genera, 684. S. W.

The columbine was emblematical of forsaken lovers:

"The *columbine* in tawny often taken,
"*Is then ascribed to such as are forsaken.*"

Browne's Britannia's Pastorals, b. i. song ii. 1613.
HOLT WHITE.

Ophelia gives her fennel and columbines to the *king*. In the collection of Sonnets quoted above, the former is thus mentioned:

"*Fennel* is *for flatterers*,
"An evil thing 'tis sure;
"But I have alwaies meant truely,
"With constant heart most pure."

See also, Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: "*Dare finocchio*, to give *fennel*,—to flatter, to dissemble." MALONE.

[8] — there's RUE for you; and here's some for me:—we may call it, HERB OF GRACE O'SUNDAYS: &c.] I believe there is a quibble meant in this passage; *rue* anciently signifying the same as *ruth*, i. e. sorrow. Ophelia gives the Queen some, and keeps a proportion of it for herself. There is the same kind of play with the same word in King Richard II.

Herb of grace is one of the titles which *Tucca* gives to *William Rufus*, in Decker's Satiromastix. I suppose the first syllable of the surname *Ru*fus introduced the quibble.

In Doctor Do-good's Directions, an ancient ballad, is the same allusion:

"If a man have light fingers that he cannot charme,
"Which will pick men's pockets, and do such like harme,
"He must be let blood, in a scarfe weare his arme,
"And drink the *herb grace* in a posset luke-warme."
STEEVENS.

The following passage from Greene's Quip for an Upstart Courtier, will furnish the best reason for calling *rue* herb of grace o'Sundays: "—some of them smil'd and said, *Rue* was called *Herbegrace*, which though they scorned in their youth, they might wear in their age, and that it was never too late to say *miserere*."
HENLEY.

; may wear * your rue with a difference [9].—There's a daisy [1]:—I would give you some violets; but they withered all, when my father died [2]:—They say, he made a good end,——

* First folio, *Oh you must wear.*

Herb of grace was not the *Sunday name*, but the *every day* name of *rue*. In the common Dictionaries of Shakspeare's time it is called *herb of grace*. See Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598, in v. *ruta*, and Cotgrave's French Dictionary, 1611, in v. *rue*. There is no ground, therefore, for supposing with Dr. Warburton, that *rue* was called herb of grace, from its being used in exorcisms performed in churches on Sundays.

Ophelia only means, I think, that the Queen may with peculiar propriety on *Sundays*, when she solicits pardon for that crime which she has so much occasion to *rue* and repent of, call her rue, *herb of grace*. So, in King Richard II.:

"Here did she drop a tear; here in this place
"I'll set a bank of *rue*, sour *herb of grace*.
"*Rue*, even for *ruth*, here shortly shall be seen,
"In the remembrance of a weeping queen."

Ophelia, after having given the Queen *rue* to remind her of the *sorrow* and *contrition* she ought to feel for her incestuous marriage, tells her, she may wear it with a *difference*, to distinguish it from that worn by Ophelia herself; because her tears flowed from the loss of a father, those of the Queen ought to flow for her guilt.

MALONE.

9 — you may wear your rue WITH A DIFFERENCE.] This seems to refer to the rules of heraldry, where the younger brothers of a family bear the same arms *with a difference*, or mark of distinction. So, in Holinshed's Reign of King Richard II. p. 443: "— because he was the youngest of the Spensers, he bare a border gules for a *difference*."

There may, however, be somewhat more implied here than is expressed. You, madam, (says Ophelia to the Queen,) may call your *rue* by its Sunday name, *herb of grace*, and so wear it with a *difference* to distinguish it from mine, which can never be any thing but merely *rue*, i. e. sorrow. STEEVENS.

1 There's a DAISY:] Greene, in his Quip for an Upstart Courtier, has explained the significance of this flower: "— Next them grew the *dissembling daisie*, to warne such light-of-love wenches not to trust every faire promise that such amorous bachelors make them." HENLEY.

2 I would give you some violets; but they wither'd all, when my father died:] So, in Bion's beautiful elegy on the death of Adonis: *v. 75.*

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy [3],— [Sings.

Laer. Thought and affliction [4], passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

Oph. *And will he not come again?* [Sings.
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead,
Go to thy death-bed,
He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow [5],
All flaxen was his poll:

——— πάντα σὺν αὐτῳ
Ως τῆνος τέθνακε, καὶ ἄνθεα πάντ' ἐμαράνθη. Todd.

The violet is thus characterized in the old collection of Sonnets above quoted, printed in 1584:

" *Violet* is for *faithfulnesse*,
" Which in me shall abide;
" Hoping likewise that from your heart
" You will not let it slide." Malone.

[3] *For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,*] This is part of an old song, mentioned likewise by Beaumont and Fletcher, in The Two Noble Kinsmen, Act IV. Sc. I.:

" —— I can sing the broom,
" And *Bonny Robin*."

In the books of the Stationers' Company, 26 April, 1594, is entered "A ballad, intituled, A doleful adewe to the last Erle of Darbie, to the tune of *Bonny sweet Robin*." Steevens.

The "Courtly new ballad of the princely wooing of the faire maid of London, by King Edward," is also "to the tune of *Bonny sweet Robin*." Ritson.

[4] Thought and affliction,] *Thought* here, as in many other places, signifies *melancholy*. Malone.

So, in Antony and Cleopatra:

" *Think* and die."

See notes on that passage, Act III. Sc. XI.

[5] *His beard was as white as snow*, &c.] This, and several circumstances in the character of Ophelia, seem to have been ridiculed in Eastward Hoe, a comedy, written by Ben Jonson, Chapman, and Marston, printed in 1605, Act III.:

" His head as white as milk,
" All flaxen was his hair,

He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan;
God 'a mercy on his soul!

And of all christian souls[6]! I pray God *. God be wi' you! [*Exit* OPHELIA.

LAER. Do you see this, O God[7]?

KING. Laertes, I must commune with your grief[8], Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:
If by direct or by collateral hand

* Quarto omits *I pray God*.

" But now he's dead,
" And laid in his bed,
" And never will come again,
" God be at your labour!" STEEVENS.

[6] *God 'a mercy on his soul!*

And of all christian souls!] This is the common conclusion to many of the ancient monumental inscriptions. See Weever's Funeral Monuments, p. 657, 658. Berthelette, the publisher of Gower's Confessio Amantis, 1554, speaking first of the funeral of Chaucer, and then of Gower, says: " —he lieth buried in the monasterie of Seynt Peter's at Westminster, &c. *On whose soules and all christen, Jesu have mercie.*" STEEVENS.

[7] Do you see this,—oh God!] So the quartos. The folio reads—*you gods?* and so makes Laertes talk like a heathen instead of a christian, which he is supposed to be in the play. *Do you see this?* is spoken to the king and queen: and *O God!* is only an exclamation expressing the anguish of Laertes's mind on the sight of his sister's phrenzy. JENNENS.

[8] —COMMUNE with your grief,] The folio reads—*common*. To *common* is to *commune*. This word, pronounced as anciently spelt, is still in frequent provincial use. So, in The Last Voyage of Captaine Frobisher, by Dionyse Settle, 12mo. bl. l. 1577: " Our Generall repayred with the ship boat to *common* or sign with them." Again, in Holinshed's account of Jack Cade's insurrection: " —to whome were sent from the king the archbishop, &c. to *common* with him of his griefs and requests."
STEEVENS.

Surely the word *common* in the folio means, I must be allowed to participate in your grief, to feel *in common* with you.
BOSWELL.

They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but, if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.

LAER. Let this be so;
His means of death, his obscure funeral *,—
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones [9],
No noble rite, nor formal ostentation,—
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
That I must call't † in question.

KING. So you shall;
And, where the offence is, let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.

Another Room in the Same.

Enter HORATIO, *and a Servant.*

HOR. What are they, that would speak with me?

SERV. Sailors, sir ‡;
They say, they have letters for you.

HOR. Let them come in.—
[*Exit Servant.*

* First folio, *burial.* † First folio, *call.*
‡ Quarto, *sea-faring men, sir.*

9 No trophy, sword, nor hatchment, o'er his bones,] It was the custom, in the times of our author, to hang a sword over the grave of a knight. JOHNSON.

This practice is uniformly kept up to this day. Not only the sword, but the helmet, gauntlet, spurs, and tabard (i. e. a coat whereon the armorial ensigns were anciently depicted, from whence the term *coat of armour*,) are hung over the grave of every knight. SIR J. HAWKINS.

I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

1 *Sail.* God bless you, sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

1 *Sail.* He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir; it comes * from the ambassador that was bound for England; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor. [*Reads.*] *Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king; they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chace: Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour; and* † *in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant, they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me, like thieves of mercy; but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou would'st fly death. I have words to speak in thine* ‡ *ear, will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter*[9]. *These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.*

He that thou knowest thine, Hamlet.

Come, I will give you way for these your letters;

* Quarto, *it came.* † First folio omits *and.*
‡ First folio, *your.*

[9] —*for the* BORE *of the matter.*] The *bore* is the caliber of a gun, or the capacity of the barrel. 'The matter (says Hamlet) would carry heavier words.' JOHNSON.

And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.

Another Room in the Same.

Enter King and Laertes.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend;
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he, which hath your noble father slain,
Pursu'd my life.

Laer. It well appears:—But tell me,
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful * and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, greatness †, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.

King. O, for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But ‡ yet to me they are strong. The queen his mother,
Lives almost by his looks; and for my self,
(My virtue, or my plague, be it either which,)
She is so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a publick count I might not go,
Is, the great love the general gender [1] bear him:
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,

* Quarto, *criminal.*
† First folio omits *greatness.*
‡ First folio, *And.*

[1] — the general gender —] The *common race* of the people. Johnson.

Work like the spring [2] that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind [3],
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost;
A sister driven into desperate terms;
Whose worth, if praises may go back again [4],
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections:—But my revenge will come.

[2] Work like the spring, &c.] This simile is neither very seasonable in the deep interest of this conversation, nor very accurately applied. If the *spring* had changed base metals to gold, the thought had been more proper. Johnson.

The folio, instead of—*work*, reads—*would*.

The same comparison occurs in Churchyard's Choise:

"So there is *wood* that water turns to *stones*."

In Thomas Lupton's Third Book of Notable Things, 4to. bl. l. there is also mention of "a well, that whatsoever is throwne into the same, is *turned into a stone*."

This, however, we learn from Ovid, is no modern supposition:

Flumen habent Cicones, quod potum saxea reddit
Viscera, quod tactis inducit marmora rebus.

See also, Hackluyt, vol. i. p. 565. Steevens.

The allusion here is to the qualities still ascribed to the dropping well at Knaresborough in Yorkshire. Camden (edit. 1590, p. 564,) thus mentions it: "Sub quo fons est in quem ex impendentibus rupibus aquæ guttatim distillant, unde *Dropping Well* vocant, in quem *quicquid ligni immittitur, lapideo cortice brevi obduci et lapidescere observatum est*." Reed.

[3] —for so loud a wind,] Thus the folio. The quarto 1604 reads—for so *loued arm'd*. If these words have any meaning, it should seem to be [as Mr. Jennens has remarked]—The instruments of offence I employ, would have proved too weak to injure one who is so *loved and arm'd* by the affection of the people. Their love, like *armour*, would revert the arrow to the bow.

The reading in the text, however, is supported in Ascham's Toxophilus, edit. 1589, p. 57: "Weake bowes and *lighte shaftes* cannot stand in a *rough winde*." Steevens.

Loued arm'd is as extraordinary a corruption as any that is found in these plays. Malone.

[4] —if praises may go back again,] If I may praise what has been, but is now to be found no more. Johnson.

King. Break not your sleeps for that: you must not think,
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger [5],
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more:
I loved your father, and we love ourself;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,—
How now? what news [6]?

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet [7]:
This to your majesty; this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet! who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say: I saw them not;
They were given me by Claudio, he receiv'd them
Of him that brought them [8].

King. Laertes, you shall hear them:—
Leave us. [*Exit Messenger.*

[Reads.] *High and mighty, you shall know, I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes: when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasions of my sudden and more strange return.* *Hamlet.*

What should this mean! Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. *Naked,*—

[5] That we can let our beard be shook with danger,] It is wonderful that none of the advocates for the learning of Shakspeare have told us that this line is imitated from Persius, Sat. ii.:

Idcirco stolidam præbet tibi vellere barbam
Jupiter? Steevens.

[6] How now? &c.] Omitted in the quartos. Theobald.

[7] Letters, &c.] Omitted in the quartos. Steevens.

[8] Of him that brought them.] I have restored this hemistich from the quartos. Steevens.

And, in a postscript here, he says, *alone*:
Can you advise me?

LAER. I am lost in it, my lord. But let him come;
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
Thus diddest thou.

KING. If it be so, Laertes,
As how should it be so? how otherwise?
Will you be rul'd by me?

LAER. Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace *.

KING. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,—
As checking at his voyage [9], and that he means
No more to undertake it,—I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall:
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe;
But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
And call it, accident.

LAER.[1] My lord, I will be rul'd;

* First folio, omitting *Ay my lord*, reads, *If so you'll not o'er-rule me to a peace.*

9 As CHECKING at his voyage,] The phrase is from falconry; and may be justified from the following passage in Hinde's Eliosto Libidinoso, 1606: "—For who knows not, quoth she, that this hawk, which comes now so fair to the fist, may to-morrow *check* at the lure?"

Again, in G. Whetstone's Castle of Delight, 1576:

"But as the hawke, to gad which knowes the way,
"Will hardly leave to *checke* at carren crowes," &c.

STEEVENS.

"As *checking at his voyage.*" Thus the folio. The quarto 1604 exhibits a corruption similar to that mentioned in n. 3, p. 448. It reads:—"As *the king* at his voyage." MALONE.

[1] *Laer.* &c.] The next sixteen lines are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

The rather, if you could devise it so,
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him,
As did that one; and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege[2].

Laer. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very ribband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears,
Than settled age his sables, and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness[3].—Two months since*,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy,—
I have seen myself, and serv'd against, the French,
And they can † well on horseback: but this gallant
Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto ‡ his seat;
And to such wond'rous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorps'd and demi-natur'd

* First folio, *some two months hence.*
† First folio, *ran.* ‡ First folio, *into.*

[2] Of the unworthiest SIEGE.] Of the lowest rank. *Siege*, for *seat, place.* JOHNSON.

So, in Othello:

" ——— I fetch my birth
" From men of royal *siege*." STEEVENS.

[3] IMPORTING HEALTH and graveness.] *Importing* here may be, not *inferring* by logical consequence, but *producing* by physical effect. A young man regards show in his dress; an old man, *health.* JOHNSON.

Importing health, I apprehend, means, *denoting an attention to health.* MALONE.

Importing may only signify—*implying, denoting.* So, in King Henry VI. P. I.:

" Comets, *importing* change of times and states."

Mr. Malone's explanation, however, may be the true one.
STEEVENS.

With the brave beast[4]: so far he topp'd * my
thought,
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks[5],
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman, was't?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamord[6].

King. The very same.

Laer. I know him well: he is the brooch, indeed,
And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you;
And gave you such a masterly report,
For art and exercise in your defence[7],
And for your rapier most especial †,
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,
If one could match you: the scrimers[8] of their
nation,
He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you oppos'd them: Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
That he could nothing do, but wish and beg

* First folio, *past*. † First folio, *especially*.

4 As he had been incorps'd and demi-natur'd
With the brave beast:] This is from Sidney's Arcadia, b. ii.: "As if, Centaur-like, he had been one peece with the horse." Steevens.

5 — in forgery of shapes and tricks,] I could not contrive so many proofs of dexterity as he could perform. Johnson.

6 Lamord.] Thus the quarto 1604. Shakspeare, I suspect, wrote *Lamode*. See the next speech but one:

" —— he is the brooch, indeed,
" And gem of all the nation."

The folio has—*Lamound*. Malone.

7 — in your defence,] That is, in the *science* of defence. Johnson.

8 — the scrimers —] The *fencers*. Johnson.
From *escrimeur*, Fr. a fencer. Malone.
This unfavourable description of the French swordsmen is not in the folio. Steevens.

Your sudden coming o'er, to play with you.
Now, out of this,——
Laer. What * out of this, my lord?
King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?
Laer. Why ask you this?
King. Not that I think, you did not love your father;
But that I know, love is begun by time [9];
And that I see, in passages of proof [1],
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
There lives [2] within the very flame of love
A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it;
And nothing is at a like goodness still;
For goodness, growing to a plurisy [3],

* First folio, *why*.

9 —love is BEGUN by time;] This is obscure. The meaning may be, *love* is not innate in us, and co-essential to our nature, but begins at a certain time from some external cause, and being always subject to the operations of time, suffers change and diminution. JOHNSON.

The King reasons thus:—"I do not suspect that you did not love your father; but I know that time abates the force of affection." I therefore suspect that we ought to read:

"——love is *begone* by time;"

I suppose that Shakspeare places the syllable *be* before *-gone*, as we say, *be*-paint, *be*-spatter, *be*-think, &c. M. MASON.

1 —passages of proof,] In transactions of daily experience. JOHNSON.

2 There lives, &c.] The next ten lines are not in the folio. STEEVENS.

3 For goodness, growing to a PLURISY,] I would believe, for the honour of Shakspeare, that he wrote *plethory*. But I observe the dramatick writers of that time frequently call a fullness of blood a *plurisy*, as if it came, not from πλευρὰ, but from *plus*, *pluris*. WARBURTON.

I think the word should be spelt—*plurisy*. This passage is fully explained by one in Mascal's Treatise on Cattle, 1662, p. 187: "Against the blood, or *plurisie* of blood. The disease of blood is, some young horses will feed, and being fat will *in-*

Dies in his own too-much: That we would do,
We should do when we would; for this *would* changes,
And hath abatements and delays as many,
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this *should* is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing[4]. But, to the quick o'the ulcer:

crease blood, and so *grow to a plurisie*, and *die* thereof if he have not soon help." TOLLET.

Dr. Warburton is right. The word is spelt *plurisy* in the quarto 1604, and is used in the same sense as here, in 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, by Ford, 1633:

" Must your hot itch and *plurisie* of lust,
" The hey-day of your luxury, be fed
" Up to a surfeit? " MALONE.

We should certainly read *plurisy*, as Tollet observes. Thus, in Massinger's Unnatural Combat, Malefort says—

" ———— in a word,
" Thy *plurisy* of goodness is thy ill."

And again, in The Picture, Sophia says:

" A *plurisy* of blood you may let out," &c.

The word also occurs in The Two Noble Kinsmen. Arcite, in his invocation to Mars, says:

" ——— that heal'st with blood
" The earth, when it is sick, and cur'st the world
" Of the *plurisy* of people!" M. MASON.

Mr. Pope introduced this simile in the Essay on Criticism, v. 303:

" For works may have more wit than does them good,
" *As bodies perish through excess of blood.*"

Ascham has a thought very similar to Pope's: "Twenty to one, offend more, in writing to much, then to litle: *euen as twenty, fall into sicknesse, rather by ouer much fulnes, then by any lacke, or emptinesse.*" *The Schole-Master*, 4to. bl. l. fol. 43.
HOLT WHITE.

[4] And then this SHOULD is like a spendthrift SIGH,
That hurts by easing.] A *spendthrift sigh* is a *sigh* that makes an unnecessary waste of the vital flame. It is a notion very prevalent, that *sighs* impair the strength, and wear out the animal powers. JOHNSON.

So, in the Governall of Helthe, &c. printed by Wynkyn de Worde: "And for why whan a man casteth out that noble humour too moche, he is hugely dyscolored, and his body moche

Hamlet comes back; What would you undertake,
To show yourself in deed your father's son
More than in words?

febled, more then he lete four *sythes*, soo moche blode oute of his body." STEEVENS.

Hence they are called, in King Henry VI.—*blood-consuming sighs*. Again, in Pericles, 1609:

"Do not *consume* your *blood with sorrowing*."

The idea is enlarged upon in Fenton's Tragical Discourses, 1579: "Why staye you not in tyme the source of your scorching *sighes*, that have already drayned your body of his wholesome humoures, appoynted by nature to gyve sucke to the entrals and inward parts of you?"

The original quarto, as well as the folio, reads—"a spendthrift's sigh;" but I have no doubt that it was a corruption, arising from the first letter of the following word *sigh*, being an *s*. I have, therefore, with the other modern editors, printed "*spendthrift* sigh," following a late quarto, (which however is of no authority,) printed in 1611. That a sigh, if it consumes the blood, *hurts us by easing*, or is prejudicial to us on the whole, though it affords a temporary relief, is sufficiently clear: but the former part of the line, *and then this should*, may require a little explanation. I suppose the King means to say, that if we do not promptly execute what we are convinced we *should* or ought to do, we shall afterwards in vain repent our not having seized the fortunate moment for action: and this opportunity which we have let go by us, and the reflection that we *should* have done that, which, from supervening accidents, it is no longer in our power to do, is as prejudicial and painful to us as a blood-consuming sigh, that at once hurts and eases us.

I apprehend the poet meant to compare such a conduct, and the consequent reflection, *only* to the *pernicious* quality which he supposed to be annexed to sighing, and not to the temporary ease which it affords. His similes, as I have frequently had occasion to observe, seldom run on four feet. MALONE.

I cannot but prefer the reading of the original quarto, supported by the first folio. Sorrow for neglected opportunities and time abused seems to be most aptly compared to *the sigh of a spendthrift*, which will not avail to recover his money squandered in vice or folly. With regard to the latter member of the comparison,—I might excuse myself from the task of reconciling it with this explanation by the just remark of Mr. Malone that our author's similes "seldom run on four feet." But, in fact, the words seem to comprise a most important and solemn precept; no less than that good resolutions not carried into effect are deeply injurious to the moral character. Like sighs, "they hurt by easing:" they

Laer. To cut his throat i'the church.
King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Lartes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber:
Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home:
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you; bring you, in fine, together,
And wager o'er your heads: he, being remiss[5],
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils: so that, with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated[6], and, in a pass of practice[7],
Requite him for your father.

unburden the mind, and satisfy the conscience, without producing any effect upon the conduct. BLAKEWAY.

5 — he, being remiss,] He being not vigilant or cautious. JOHNSON.

6 A sword UNBATED,] i. e. not blunted as foils are. Or, as one edition has it, *embaited* or *envenomed*. POPE.

There is no such reading as *embaited* in any edition. In Sir Thomas North's translation of Plutarch, it is said of one of the Metelli, that "he shewed the people the cruel fight of fencers, at *unrebated* swords." STEEVENS.

Not blunted, as foils are by a button fixed to the end. So, in Love's Labour's Lost:

"That honour, which shall *bate* his scythe's keen edge."
MALONE.

7 — a pass of PRACTICE,] *Practice* is often by Shakspeare, and other writers, taken for an *insidious stratagem*, or *privy* treason, a sense not incongruous to this passage, where yet, I rather believe, that nothing more is meant than a *thrust for exercise*. JOHNSON.

So, in Look About You, 1600:

"I pray God there be no *practice* in this change."

Again:

"——— the man is like to die:
"*Practice*, by th' mass, *practice* by the, &c.———
"*Practice*, by the Lord, *practice*, I see it clear."

Again, more appositely, in our author's Twelfth-Night, Act V. Sc. ult.:

Laer. I will do't:
And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death,
That is but scratch'd withal: I'll touch my point
With this contagion; that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death [8].
King. Let's further think of this;
Weigh, what convenience, both of time and means,
May fit us to our shape [9]: if this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad perform-
ance,
'Twere better not assay'd; therefore this project
Should have a back, or second, that might hold,
If this should blast in proof [1]. Soft;—let me see:—

"This *practice* hath most shrewdly *pass'd* upon thee."
Steevens.

A pass of practice is *a favourite pass*, one that Laertes was well practised in.—In Much Ado About Nothing, Hero's father says:

"I'll prove it on his body, if he dare,
"Despite his nice fence, and his active *practice*."

The treachery on this occasion, was his using a sword *unbated* and *envenomed*. M. Mason.

[8] It may be death.] It is a matter of surprise, that no one of Shakspeare's numerous and able commentators has remarked, with proper warmth and detestation, the villainous assassin-like treachery of Laertes in this horrid plot. There is the more occasion that he should be here pointed out an object of abhorrence, as he is a character we are, in some preceding parts of the play, led to respect and admire. Ritson.

[9] May fit us to our shape:] May *enable* us to *assume proper characters*, and to act our part. Johnson.

[1] — blast in proof.] This, I believe, is a metaphor taken from a mine, which, in the proof or execution, sometimes breaks out with an ineffectual *blast*. Johnson.

The word *proof* shows the metaphor to be taken from the trying or proving fire-arms or cannon, which often *blast* or *burst* in the *proof*. Steevens.

We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings,—
I ha't:
When in your motion you are hot and dry,
(As make your bouts more violent to that end,)
And that he calls for drink, I'll have preferr'd him [2]
A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck [3],
Our purpose may hold there. But stay, what noise [4]?

Enter Queen.

How now, sweet queen [5]?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel [6],

[2] — I'll have PREFERR'D HIM—] i. e. presented to him. Thus the quarto 1604. The word indeed is mispelt, *prefard*. The folio reads—I'll have *prepar'd* him. MALONE.

To *prefer* (as Mr. Malone observes,) certainly means—to *present*, *offer*, or *bring forward*. So, in Timon of Athens:

"Why then *preferr'd* you not your sums and bills?"

STEEVENS.

[3] If he by chance escape your venom'd STUCK,] For *stuck*, read *tuck*, a common name for a *rapier*. BLACKSTONE.

"Your venom'd *stuck*," is, your venom'd *thrust*. *Stuck* was a term of the fencing-school. So, in Twelfth-Night: "—and he gives me the *stuck* with such a mortal motion—." Again, in The Return from Parnassus, 1606: "Here is a fellow, Judicio, that carried the deadly *stocke* in his pen."—See Florio's Italian Dict. 1598: "*Stoccata*, a foyne, a thrust, a *stoccado* given in fence."

MALONE.

[4] —But stay, what noise?] I have recovered this from the quartos. STEEVENS.

[5] How NOW, sweet queen?] These words are not in the quarto. The word *now*, which appears to have been omitted by the carelessness of the transcriber or compositor, was supplied by the editor of the second folio. MALONE.

[6] One woe doth tread upon another's heel,] A similar thought occurs in Pericles, Prince of Tyre, 1609:

"One sorrow never comes, but brings an heir,
"That may succeed as his inheritor." STEEVENS.

Again, in Drayton's Mortimeriados, 4to. 1596:

"—— miseries, which seldom come alone,
"Thick on the neck one of another fell."

So fast they follow:—Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows ascaunt the brook [7],
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
Therewith fantastick garlands did she make
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples [8],
That liberal [9] shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds

Again, in Shakspeare's 131st Sonnet:

"A thousand groans, but thinking on thy fall,
"One on another's neck ——." Malone.

Again, in Locrine, 1595:

"One mischief follows on another's neck."

And this also is the first line of a queen's speech on a lady's drowning herself. Ritson.

7 — ascaunt the brook,] Thus the quartos. The folio reads—*aslant*. *Ascaunce* is interpreted in a note of Mr. Tyrwhitt's on Chaucer—*askew*, *aside*, *sideways*. Steevens.

8 — and long purples,] By *long purples* is meant a plant, the modern botanical name of which is *orchis morio mas*, anciently *testiculus morionis*. The *grosser name* by which it passes, is sufficiently known in many parts of England, and particularly in the county where Shakspeare lived. Thus far Mr. Warner. Mr. Collins adds, that in Sussex it is still called *dead men's hands*; and that in Lyte's Herbal, 1578, its various names, too gross for repetition, are preserved.

Dead men's thumbs are mentioned in an ancient bl. l. ballad, entitled The Deceased Maiden Lover:

"Then round the meddowes did she walke,
"Catching each flower by the stalke,
"Such as within the meddowes grew;
"As *dead mans thumbe*, and hare-bell blew." Steevens.

One of the grosser names of this plant Gertrude had a particular reason to avoid:—*the rampant widow*. Malone.

9 — liberal —] *Licentious*. See Much Ado About Nothing, vol. vii. p. 110: and Othello, Act II. Sc. I. Reed.

Liberal is free spoken, licentious in language. "So, in Othello: "Is he not a most prophane and *liberal* counsellor?" Again, in A Woman's a Weathercock, by N. Field, 1612:

"——— Next that, the fame
"Of your neglect, and *liberal*-talking tongue,
"Which breeds my honour an eternal wrong." Malone.

Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;
When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;
And, mermaid-like, a while they bore her up:
Which time, she chanted snatches of old tunes [1];
As one incapable of her own distress [2],
Or like a creature native and indu'd
Unto that element [3]: but long it could not be,
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death [4].

[1] Which time, she chanted snatches of old TUNES;] Fletcher, in his Scornful Lady, very invidiously ridicules this incident:

"I will run mad first, and if that get not pity,
"I'll drown myself to a most dismal ditty." WARBURTON.

The quartos read—snatches of old *lauds*, i. e. [as Mr. Jennens remarks] *hymns*. STEEVENS.

[2] As one INCAPABLE of her own distress,] As one having no *understanding* or knowledge of her danger. See p. 399, n. 1. MALONE.

That is, *insensible*. So, in King Richard III.:

"*Incapable* and shallow innocents." RITSON.

[3] Or like a creature native and INDU'D
Unto that element:] I do not think the word *indued* is sense in this place; and believe we should read *inured*.

Shakspeare seems to have forgot himself in this scene, as there is not a single circumstance in the relation of Ophelia's death, that induces us to think she had drowned herself intentionally. M. MASON.

As we are indued with certain original dispositions and propensities at our birth, Shakspeare here uses *indued* with great licentiousness, for formed by nature; clothed, endowed, or furnished with properties suited to the element of water.

Our old writers used *indued* and *endowed* indiscriminately. "To indue," says Minsheu in his Dictionary, "sepissime refertur ad dotes animo infusas, quibus nimirum ingenium alicujus imbutum et initiatum est, unde et G. *instruire* est. L. *imbuere*. *Imbuere* proprie est inchoare et initiari."

In Cotgrave's French Dictionary, 1611, *instruire* is interpreted, "to fashion, to furnish with." MALONE.

[4] To muddy death.] In the first scene of the next Act we find Ophelia buried with such rites as betoken she *foredid her own*

Laer. Alas then, she is drown'd?
Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.
Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: But yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out [5].—Adieu, my lord!
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
But that this folly drowns it [6]. [*Exit.*
King. Let's follow, Gertrude:
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I, this will give it start again;
Therefore, let's follow. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

A Church Yard.

Enter Two Clowns, with Spades, &c.

1 *Clo.* Is she to be buried in christian burial, that * wilfully seeks her own salvation?
2 *Clo.* I tell thee, she is; therefore † make her

* Quarto, *when she.* † First folio, *and therefore.*

life. It should be remembered, that the account here given is that of a friend; and that the Queen could not posssibly know what passed in the mind of Ophelia, when she placed herself in so perilous a situation. After the facts had been weighed and considered, the priest in the next Act pronounces, that *her death was doubtful.* Malone.

5 The woman will be out.] See Henry V. Act IV. Sc. VI. Steevens.

6 But that this folly drowns it.] Thus the quarto 1604. The folio reads—But that this folly *doubts* it; i. e. *doubts*, or extinguishes it. See p. 229, n. 4. Malone.

grave straight[7]: the crowner hath set on her, and finds it christian burial.

1 *Clo.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2 *Clo.* Why, 'tis found so.

1 *Clo.* It must be *se offendendo;* it cannot be else. For here lies the point: If I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform[8]: Argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

2 *Clo.* Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

1 *Clo.* Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the man; good: If the man go

---

7 — make her grave STRAIGHT:] Make her grave from east to west in a direct line parallel to the church; not from north to south, athwart the regular line. This, I think, is meant.

JOHNSON.

I cannot think that this means any more than make *her grave immediately.* She is to be buried in *christian burial,* and consequently the grave is to be made as usual. My interpretation may be justified from the following passage in King Henry V. and the play before us: "—— We cannot lodge and board a dozen or fourteen gentlewomen who live by the prick of their needles, but it will be thought we keep a bawdy-house *straight.*"

Again, in Hamlet, Act III. Sc. IV.:

"*Pol.* He will come *straight.*"

Again, in The Lover's Progress, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"*Lis.* Do you fight *straight?*

"*Clar.* Yes presently."

Again, in The Merry Wives of Windsor:

"—— we'll come and dress you *straight.*"

Again, in Othello:

"Farewell, my Desdemona, I will come to thee *straight.*"

STEEVENS.

Again, in Troilus and Cressida:

"Let us make ready *straight.*"

Again, in G. Herbert's Jacula Prudentum, 1651, we have a proverbial saying: "There is no church-yard so handsome that a man would desire *straight* to be buried there." MALONE.

8 — an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform:] Ridicule on scholastick divisions without distinction; and of distinctions without difference. WARBURTON.

to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes; mark you that: but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself! Argal, he, that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

2 *Clo.* But is this law?

1 *Clo.* Ay, marry is't; crowner's quest-law [9].

2 *Clo.* Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out of christian burial.

1 *Clo.* Why, there thou say'st: And the more pity; that great folks shall have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even christian [1]. Come, my spade. There

9 — crowner's quest-law.] I strongly suspect that this is a ridicule on the case of Dame Hales, reported by Plowden in his Commentaries, as determined in 3 Eliz.

It seems, her husband, Sir James Hales, had drowned himself in a river; and the question was, whether by this act a forfeiture of a lease from the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, which he was possessed of, did not accrue to the crown: an inquisition was found before the coroner, which found him *felo de se*. The legal and logical subtilties, arising from the course of the argument of this case, gave a very fair opportunity for a sneer at *crowner's quest-law*. The expression, a little before, that *an act hath three branches*, &c. is so pointed an allusion to the case I mention, that I cannot doubt but that Shakspeare was acquainted with, and meant to laugh at it.

It may be added, that on this occasion a great deal of subtilty was used, to ascertain whether Sir James was the *agent* or the *patient*; or, in other words, whether *he went to the water, or the water came to him*. The cause of Sir James's madness was the circumstance of his having been the judge who condemned Lady Jane Grey. Sir J. Hawkins.

If Shakspeare meant to allude to the case of Dame Hales, (which indeed seems not improbable,) he must have heard of that case in conversation; for it was determined before he was born, and Plowden's Commentaries, in which it is reported, were not translated into English till a few years ago. Our author's study was probably not much encumbered with old French Reports. Malone.

1 — their EVEN christian.] So, all the old books, and rightly. An old English expression for fellow-christian. Thirlby.

is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *Clo.* Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clo.* He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 *Clo.* [2] Why, he had none.

1 *Clo.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the scripture? The scripture says, Adam digged: Could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself——[3]

2 *Clo.* Go to.

1 *Clo.* What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clo.* The gallows-maker; for that frame * outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Clo.* I like thy wit well, in good faith; the gallows does well: But how does it well? it does

* Quarto omits *frame*.

So, in Chaucer's Jack Upland: "If freres cannot or mow not excuse 'hem of these questions asked of 'hem, it seemeth that they be horrible giltie against God, and *ther even christian;*" &c.

Again, in Gower, de Confessione Amantis, lib. v. fol. 102:

"Of beautie sighe he never hir *even*."

Again, Chaucer's Persones Tale: "—— of his neighbour, that is to sayn, of his *even cristen*," &c. This phrase also occurs frequently in the Paston Letters. See vol. iii. p. 421, &c. &c. "That is to say, in relieving and sustenance of your *even christen*," &c.—Again: "—— to dispose and help your *even christen*." STEEVENS.

So, King Henry Eighth, in his answer to parliament in 1546: "—— you might say that I, beyng put in so speciall a trust as I am in this case, were no trustie frende to you, nor charitable man to mine *even christian*—." *Hall's Chronicle*, fol. 261.

MALONE.

[2] 2 *Clo.*] This speech, and the next as far as—*without arms*, is not in the quartos. STEEVENS.

[3] — confess thyself —] *And be hanged*, the Clown, I suppose, would have said, if he had not been interrupted. This was a common proverbial sentence. See Othello, Act IV. Sc. I.—He might, however, have intended to say, *confess thyself an ass*.

MALONE.

well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill, to say, the gallows is built stronger than the church; argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again; come.

2 *Clo.* Who builds [4] stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clo.* Ay, tell me that, and unyoke [5].

2 *Clo.* Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Clo.* To't.

2 *Clo.* Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter Hamlet and Horatio, at a distance.

1 *Clo.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it [6]; for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating: and, when you are asked this question next, say, a grave-maker; the houses that he makes, last till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan *, and fetch me a stoup † of liquor. [*Exit 2 Clown.*

* Quarto, *Get thee in.* † Quarto, *Soope.*

[4] Who builds, &c.] The inquisitive reader may meet with an assemblage of such queries (which perhaps composed the chief festivity of our ancestors by an evening fire) in a volume of very scarce tracts, preserved in the University Library, at Cambridge, D. 5. 2. The innocence of these *Demaundes Joyous* may deserve a praise which is not always due to their delicacy. Steevens.

[5] Ay, tell me that, and UNYOKE.] If it be not sufficient to say, with Dr. Warburton, that this phrase might be taken from husbandry, without much depth of reading, we may produce it from a dittie of the workmen of Dover, preserved in the additions to Holinshed, p. 1546:

"My bow is broke, I would *unyoke*,
"My foot is sore, I can worke no more." Farmer.

Again, in Drayton's Polyolbion, at the end of Song I.:

"Here I'll *unyoke* a while and turne my steeds to meat."

Again, in P. Holland's translation of Pliny's Natural History, p. 593: "—— in the evening, and when thou dost *unyoke*." Steevens.

[6] Cudgel thy BRAINS no more about it:] So, in The Maydes Metamorphosis, by Lyly, 1600:

"In vain I fear, *I beat my brains* about
"Proving by search to find my mistresse out." Malone.

1 Clown digs, and sings.

In youth, when I did love, did love[7],
Methought, it was very sweet,
To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove
O, methought, there was nothing meet[8].

[7] *In youth, when I did love,* &c.] The three stanzas, sung here by the Grave-Digger, are extracted, with a slight variation, from a little poem, called The Aged Lover Renounceth Love, written by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, who flourished in the reign of King Henry VIII. and who was beheaded 1547, on a strained accusation of treason. THEOBALD.

[8] *To contract, O, the time, for,* AH, *my behove*
O, methought, there was nothing meet.] This passage, as it stands, is absolute nonsense; but if we read "for, *aye,*" instead of "for, *ah,*" it will have some kind of sense, as it may mean, "that it was not meet, though he was in love, to contract himself *for ever.*" M. MASON.

Dr. Percy is of opinion that the different corruptions in these stanzas, might have been "designed by the poet himself, the better to paint the character of an illiterate clown."

Behove is *interest, convenience.* So, in the 4th book of Phaer's version of the Æneid:

"—— wilt for thyne own *behove.*" STEEVENS.

To contract O the time for A *my behove:*

"*O methought there* A *was nothing* A *meet.*" All but the quartos omit these A's; which are no part of the song, but only the breath forced out by the strokes of the mattock. JENNENS.

"— nothing meet." Thus the folio. The quarto 1604 reads:

"O me thought there *a* was nothing *a* meet." MALONE.

The original poem from which this stanza is taken, like the other succeeding ones, is preserved among Lord Surrey's poems; though, as Dr. Percy has observed, it is attributed to Lord Vaux by George Gascoigne. See an epistle prefixed to one of his poems, printed with the rest of his works, 1575. By others it is supposed to have been written by Sir Thomas Wyatt:

"I lothe that I did love;
"In youth that I thought swete:
"As time requires for my behove,
"Methinks they are not mete."

All these difficulties, however, (says the Rev. Thomas Warton, History of English Poetry, vol. iii p. 45,) are at once adjusted by MS. Harl. 1703, 25, in the British Museum, in which we have a copy of Vaux's poem, beginning, *I lothe that I did love,* with the title, "A dyttie or sonet made by the lord Vaus, in the time of the noble quene Marye, representing the image of death."

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business? he sings* at grave-making.

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1 *Clo. But age, with his stealing steps,*
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me into the land,
As if I had never been such [9].

[Throws up a scull.

Ham. That scull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! This† might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches [1]; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier; which could say, *Good-morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?*

* First folio, *that he sings.* † First folio, *It.*

The entire song is published by Dr. Percy, in the first volume of his Reliques of Ancient English Poetry. STEEVENS.

9 *As if I had never been such.*] Thus, in the original:

"For age with stealing steps
"Hath claude me with his crowch;
"And lusty youthe away he leapes,
"As there had bene none such." STEEVENS.

1 — which this ass NOW O'ER-REACHES;] The folio reads—*o'er-offices* [and omits *now*]. STEEVENS.

In the quarto [1604], for *over-offices*, is *over-reaches*, which agrees better with the sentence: it is a strong exaggeration to remark, that an *ass* can *over-reach* him who would once have tried to *circumvent* —. I believe, both these words were Shakspeare's. An author in revising his work, when his original ideas have faded from his mind, and new observations have produced new sentiments, easily introduces images which have been more newly impressed upon him, without observing their want of congruity to the general texture of his original design. JOHNSON.

This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it [2]; might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so: and now my lady Worm's [3]; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade: Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with them [4]? mine ache to think on't.

[2] This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it;] So, in Timon of Athens, Act I.:

" —— my lord, you gave
" Good words the other day of a bay courser
" I rode on; it is yours, because you lik'd it."

STEEVENS.

[3] — and now my lady Worm's;] The scull that was *my lord Such-a-one's*, is now *my lady Worm's*. JOHNSON.

[4] — to play at LOGGATS with them?] This is a game played in several parts of England even at this time. A stake is fixed into the ground; those who play, throw *loggats* at it, and he that is nearest the stake, wins: I have seen it played in different counties at their sheep-shearing feasts, where the winner was entitled to a black fleece, which he afterwards presented to the farmer's maid to spin for the purpose of making a petticoat, and on condition that she knelt down on the fleece to be kissed by all the rusticks present.

So, Ben Jonson, Tale of a Tub, Act IV. Sc. VI.:

" Now are they tossing of his legs and arms,
" Like *loggats* at a pear-tree."

Again, in an old collection of Epigrams, Satires, &c.:

" To play at *loggats*, nine holes, or ten pinnes."

Again, in Decker's If this be Not a Good Play, the Devil is in It, 1612:

" —— two hundred crowns!
" I've lost as much at *loggats*."

It is one of the unlawful games enumerated in the statute of 33 of Henry VIII. STEEVENS.

Loggeting in the fields is mentioned for the first time among other "*new* and crafty games and plays," in the statute of 33 Henry VIII. c. 9. Not being mentioned in former acts against unlawful games, it was probably not practised long before the statute of Henry the Eighth was made. MALONE.

1 *Clo. A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,* [Sings.
For—and a shrouding sheet:
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet [5].

[Throws up a scull.

Ham. There's another: Why may not that be the scull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits [6] now, his quillets [7], his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude * knave now to knock him about the sconce [8] with a dirty shovel, and

* Quarto, *mad.*

A *loggat*-ground, like a skittle-ground, is strewed with ashes, but is more extensive. A bowl much larger than the jack of the game of bowls is thrown first. The pins, which I believe are called *loggats*, are much thinner, and lighter at one extremity than the other. The bowl being first thrown, the players take the pins up by the thinner and lighter end, and fling them towards the bowl, and in such a manner that the pins may once turn round in the air, and slide with the thinner extremity foremost towards the bowl. The pins are about one or two-and-twenty inches long.
BLOUNT.

5 *For such a guest is meet.*] Thus in the original:
"A pick-axe and a spade,
"And eke a shrowding sheet;
"A house of clay for to be made,
"For such a guest most meet." STEEVENS.

6 — quiddits, &c.] i. e. subtilties. So, in Soliman and Perseda:
"I am wise, but *quiddits* will not answer death."
STEEVENS.

Again, in Drayton's Owle, 4to. 1604:
"By some strange *quiddit*, or some wrested clause,
"To find him guiltie of the breach of lawes." MALONE.

7 — his QUILLETS,] So, in Ram Alley, or Merry Tricks, 1611:
"Nay, good Sir Throat, forbear your *quillets* now."
STEEVENS.

Quillets are 'nice and frivolous distinctions.' The word is rendered by Cole, in his Latin Dictionary, 1679, *res frivola*.
MALONE.

8 — the sconce —] i. e. the head. So, in Lyly's Mother Bombie, 1594:
"Laudo ingenium; I like thy *sconce*."
Again, in Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks, 1611:

will not tell him of his action of battery? Humph! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes[9], his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers[1], his recoveries: Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries[2], to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance in that[3]. I will speak to this fellow:—Whose grave's this, sirrah *?

* First folio, *sir*.

" ———— I say no more;
" But 'tis within this *sconce* to go beyond them."

STEEVENS.

See Comedy of Errors, Act I. Sc. IV. MALONE.

9 — his STATUTES,] By a statute is here meant, not an act of parliament, but a species of security for money, affecting real property; whereby the lands of the debtor are conveyed to the creditor, till out of the rents and profits of them his debt may be satisfied. MALONE.

1 — his DOUBLE VOUCHERS, &c.] A recovery with *double voucher* is the one usually suffered, and is so denominated from *two* persons (the latter of whom is always the common cryer, or some such inferior person,) being successively *voucher*, or called upon, to warrant the tenant's title. Both *fines* and *recoveries* are fictions of law, used to convert an estate tail into a fee simple. *Statutes* are (not acts of parliament, but) *statutes-merchant* and *staple*, particular modes of *recognizance* or acknowledgment for securing *debts*, which thereby become a charge upon the party's land. *Statutes* and *recognizances* are constantly mentioned together in the covenants of a purchase deed. RITSON.

2 Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries,] Omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

3 — ASSURANCE in that.] A quibble is intended. Deeds, which

1 *Clo.* Mine, sir.—

O, a pit of clay for to be made [Sings.
For such a guest is meet.

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

1 *Clo.* You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

1 *Clo.* 'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

1 *Clo.* For no man, sir.

Ham. What woman then?

1 *Clo.* For none neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

1 *Clo.* One, that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card[4], or equivocation will undo us. By

are usually written on parchment, are called the common *assurances* of the kingdom. Malone.

[4] — by the card,] The *card* is the paper on which the different points of the compass were described. *To do any thing by the card*, is, *to do it with nice observation*. Johnson.

The *card* is a *sea-chart*, still so termed by mariners: and the word is afterwards used by Osric in the same sense. Hamlet's meaning will therefore be, we must speak *directly forward in a straight line*, plainly to the point. Ritson.

So, in Macbeth:

"And the very ports they blow, &c.
"In the shipman's *card*." Steevens.

"— by the *card*," i. e. we must speak with the same precision and accuracy as is observed in marking the true distances of coasts, the heights, courses, &c. in a sea-*chart*, which in our poet's time was called a *card*. So, in The Commonwealth and Government of Venice, 4to. 1599, p. 177: "Sebastian Munster in his *carde*

the lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked[5], that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier *, he galls his kibe.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1 *Clo.* Of all the days i'the year, I came to't

* First folio, *the heels of our courtier.*

of Venice—." Again, in Bacon's Essays, p. 326, edit. 1740: "Let him carry with him also some *card*, or book, describing the country where he travelleth." In 1589 was published in 4to. A Briefe Discourse of *Mappes* and *Cardes*, and of their Uses.—The "shipman's *card*" in Macbeth, is the paper on which the different points of the compass are described. Malone.

In every ancient sea-*chart* that I have seen, the compass, &c. was likewise introduced. Steevens.

5 —the age is grown so PICKED,] So *smart*, so *sharp*, says Sir T. Hanmer, very properly; but there was, I think, about that time, a *picked* shoe, that is, *a shoe with a long pointed toe*, in fashion, to which the allusion seems likewise to be made. *Every man now is smart; and every man now is a man of fashion.* Johnson.

This fashion of wearing shoes with long pointed toes was carried to such excess in England, that it was restrained at last by proclamation so long ago as the fifth year of Edward IV. when it was ordered, "that the beaks or pykes of shoes and boots should not pass two inches, upon pain of cursing by the clergy, and forfeiting twenty shillings, to be paid, one noble to the king, another to the cordwainers of London, and the third to the chamber of London:—and for other countries and towns the like order was taken.—Before this time, and since the year 1482, the pykes of shoes and boots were of such length, that they were fain to be tied up to the knee with chains of silver, and gilt, or at least silken laces." Steevens.

"—the age is grown so *picked*," i. e. so spruce, so quaint, so affected.

There is, I think, no allusion to *picked* or pointed shoes, as has been supposed. *Picked* was a common word of Shakspeare's age, in the sense above given, and is found in Minshieu's Dictionary, 1617, with its original signification: "*Trimm'd* or drest sprucely." So, in Cole's Dictionary, 1679: "To *pick* [*trim*], exorno." It is here used metaphorically. Malone.

I should have concurred with Mr. Malone in giving a general sense to the epithet—*picked*, but for Hamlet's mention of the *toe* of the peasant, &c. Steevens.

that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long's that since?

1 *Clo.* Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: It was that very day that young Hamlet was born [6]: he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

1 *Clo.* Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

1 *Clo.* 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he [7].

Ham. How came he mad?

1 *Clo.* Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

1 *Clo.* 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

1 *Clo.* Why, here in Denmark; I have been sexton here, man, and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i'the earth ere he rot?

1 *Clo.* 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, (as we have many pocky corses now-a-days [8], that will scarce hold the laying in,) he will last you some

[6] — that young Hamlet was born:] By this scene it appears that Hamlet was then thirty years old, and knew Yorick well, who had been dead twenty-three years. And yet in the beginning of the play he is spoken of as a *very young* man, one that designed to go back to school, i. e. to the University of Wittenberg. The poet in the fifth Act had forgot what he wrote in the first.

BLACKSTONE.

[7] 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.]

Nimirum insanus paucis videatur; eo quod
Maxima pars hominum morbo jactatur eodem.

Horace, Sat. lib. II. iii. 120. STEEVENS.

[8] — now a-days,] Omitted in the quarto. MALONE.

eight year, or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another?

1 *Clo.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a scull now * hath lain you i'the earth three-and-twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

1 *Clo.* A whoreson mad fellow's it was; Whose do you think it was?

Ham. Nay, I know not.

1 *Clo.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! he poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same scull, sir, was Yorick's scull [9], the king's jester.

Ham. This? [*Takes the Scull.*

1 *Clo.* E'en that.

Ham. † Alas, poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning [1]? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber [2], and tell her, let her paint an inch

* First folio, *Here's a scull now, this scull.*

† First folio, *Let me see. Alas*, &c.

9 — Yorick's scull,] Thus the folio. The quarto reads—*Sir* Yorick's scull. Malone.

1 — your own GRINNING?] Thus the quarto 1604. The folio reads—your own *jeering*? In that copy, after this word, and *chap-fallen*, there is a note of interrogation, which all the editors have adopted. I doubt concerning its propriety. Malone.

thick, to this favour[3] she must come; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think, Alexander looked o'this fashion i'the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah!

[*Throws down the Scull.*

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: As thus; Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam: And why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Cæsar[4], dead, and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:

[2] —my lady's CHAMBER,] Thus the folio. The quartos read —my lady's *table*, meaning, I suppose, her *dressing-table*. STEEVENS.

[3] —to this FAVOUR—] i. e. to this countenance or complexion. So, in Bacon's History of King Henry the Seventh: "He was a youth of fine *favour* and shape." MALONE.

[4] IMPERIOUS Cæsar,] Thus the quarto 1604. The editor of the folio substituted *imperial*, not knowing that *imperious* was used in the same sense. See Troilus and Cressida, Act IV. Sc. V.: and Cymbeline, Act IV. Sc. II. There are other instances in the folio of a familiar term being substituted in the room of a more ancient word. See *rites*, for *crants*, in p. 477, n. 3. MALONE.

O, that the earth, which kept the world in awe,
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw[5]!
But soft! but soft! aside;—Here comes the king,

Enter Priests, &c. in Procession; the Corpse of OPHELIA, *LAERTES and Mourners following; King, Queen, their Trains, &c.*

The queen, the courtiers: Who is this * they follow?
And with such maimed rites[6]! This doth betoken,
The corse, they follow, did with desperate hand
Fordo its own life[7]. 'Twas of some estate[8]:
Couch we a while, and mark.

[*Retiring with* HORATIO.

LAER. What ceremony else?

* First folio, *that.*

5 —winter's FLAW!] Winter's *blast*. JOHNSON.
So, in Marius and Sylla, 1594:

" ——— no doubt, this stormy *flaw*,
" That Neptune sent to cast us on this shore."

The quartos read—to expel the *water's* flaw. STEEVENS.

A *flaw* meant a sudden gust of wind. So, in Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: " Groppo, a *flaw*, or berrie of wind." See also, Cotgrave's Dictionary, 1611: " *Lis de vent*, a *gust* or *flaw* of wind." MALONE.

It is used as late as by Dryden, who seems to mean by it a storm:

" And deluges of armies from the town
" Came pouring in; I heard the mighty flaw
" When first it broke." BOSWELL.

6 — maimed rites!] Imperfect obsequies. JOHNSON.

7 FORDO its own life.] To *fordo* is to *undo*, to *destroy*. So, in Othello:

" —— this is the night
" That either makes me, or *fordoes* me quite."

Again, in Acolastus, a comedy, 1529: " —— wolde to God it might be leful for me to *fordoo* myself, or to make an ende of me." STEEVENS.

8 — some estate:] Some person of high rank. JOHNSON.

Ham. That is Laertes,
A very noble youth: Mark.
Laer. What ceremony else?
1 *Priest.*[9] Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warranty[1]: Her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards[2], flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her,
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants[3],

[9] 1 *Priest.*] This *Priest* in the old quarto is called *Doctor*. STEEVENS.

[1] Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As WE HAVE WARRANTY:] Is there any allusion here to the coroner's warrant, directed to the minister and church-wardens of a parish, and permitting the body of a person, who comes to an untimely end, to receive christian burial? WHALLEY.

[2] Shards,] i. e. broken pots or tiles, called *pot-sherds*, *tile-sherds*. So, in Job, ii. 8: "And he took him a *potsherd* (i. e. a piece of a broken pot,) to scrape himself withal." RITSON.

[3] — allow'd her virgin CRANTS,] Evidently corrupted from *chants*, which is the true word. A *specific* rather than a *generic* term being here required to answer to *maiden strewments*. WARBURTON.

"——allow'd her virgin *crants*." Thus the quarto 1604. For this unusual word the editor of the first folio substituted *rites*. By a more attentive examination and comparison of the quarto copies and the folio, Dr. Johnson, I have no doubt, would have been convinced that this and many other changes in the folio were not made by Shakspeare, as is suggested in the following note. MALONE.

I have been informed by an anonymous correspondent, that *crants* is the German word for *garlands*, and I suppose it was retained by us from the Saxons. To carry *garlands* before the bier of a maiden, and to hang them over her grave, is still the practice in rural parishes.

Crants therefore was the original word, which the author, discovering to be provincial, and perhaps not understood, changed to a term more intelligible, but less proper. *Maiden rites* give no certain or definitive image. He might have put *maiden wreaths*, or *maiden garlands*, but he perhaps bestowed no thought.

Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial [4].

Laer. Must there no more be done?

1 *Priest.* No more be done!
We should profane the service of the dead,
To sing a *requiem* [5], and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i'the earth;—
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh,
May violets spring [6]!—I tell thee, churlish priest,
A minst'ring angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia!

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: Farewell!

[*Scattering flowers.*

I hop'd, thou should'st have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought, thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have * strew'd thy grave.

Laer. O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Depriv'd thee of!—Hold off the earth awhile,

* First folio, *t'have.*

upon it; and neither genius nor practice will always supply a hasty writer with the most proper diction.* Johnson.

In Minsheu's Dictionary, see *Beades*, where *roosen krants* means *sertum rosarium;* and such is the name of a character in this play. Tollet.

The names—*Rosenkrantz* and *Gyldenstiern* occur frequently in Rostgaard's Deliciæ Poetarum Danorum. Steevens.

4 — bell and BURIAL.] *Burial* here signifies interment in consecrated ground. Warburton.

5 To sing a REQUIEM.] A *requiem* is a mass performed in Popish churches for the rest of the soul of a person deceased. The folio reads—sing *sage* requiem. Steevens.

6 — from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring!] Thus, Persius, Sat. I.:

——— e tumulo, fortunataque favilla,
Nascentur violæ?* Steevens.

Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:
[*Leaps into the Grave.*
Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead;
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
To o'er-top old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [*Advancing.*] What is he, whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wand'ring stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,
Hamlet the Dane. [*Leaps into the Grave.*

Laer. The devil take thy soul!
[*Grappling with him.*

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.
I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For *, though I am not splenetive and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom † fear: Hold off thy hand ‡.

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!

All[7]. Gentlemen,——

Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the Grave.*

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son! what theme?

Ham. I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. 'Zounds §, show me what thou'lt do:

* First folio, *Sir*. † First folio, *wiseness*.
‡ First folio, *away thy hand*. § First folio, *Come*.

[7] *All*, &c.] This is restored from the quartos. STEEVENS.

Woul't weep? woul't fight? woul't fast? woul't tear thyself?
Woul't drink up Esil? eat a crocodile [8]?

[8] Woul't drink up ESIL? eat a crocodile?] This word has through all the editions been distinguished by Italick characters, as if it were the proper name of some river; and so, I dare say, all the editors have from time to time understood it to be. But then this must be some river in Denmark; and there is none there so called; nor is there any near it in name, that I know of, but *Yssel*, from which the province of Overyssel derives its title in the German Flanders. Besides, Hamlet is not proposing any impossibilities to Laertes, as the drinking up a river would be: but he rather seems to mean,—Wilt thou resolve to do things the most shocking and distasteful to human nature; and, behold, I am as resolute. I am persuaded the poet wrote:

"Wilt drink up *Eisel?* eat a crocodile?"

i. e. Wilt thou swallow down large draughts of *vinegar?* The proposition, indeed, is not very grand: but the doing it might be as distasteful and unsavoury as eating the flesh of a *crocodile*. And now there is neither an impossibility, nor an anticlimax: and the lowness of the idea is in some measure removed by the uncommon term. THEOBALD.

Sir T. Hanmer has,

"Wilt drink up *Nile?* or eat a crocodile?

Hamlet certainly meant (for he says he will rant) to dare Laertes to attempt any thing, however difficult or unnatural; and might safely promise to follow the example his antagonist was to set, in draining the channel of a river, or trying his teeth on an animal whose scales are supposed to be impenetrable Had Shakspeare meant to make Hamlet say—*Wilt thou drink vinegar?* he probably would not have used the term *drink up*; which means, *totally to exhaust*; neither is that challenge very magnificent, which only provokes an adversary to hazard a fit of the heart-burn or the colick.

The commentator's *Yssell* would serve Hamlet's turn or mine. This river is twice mentioned by Stowe, p. 735: "It standeth a good distance from the river *Issell*, but hath a sconce on *Issell* of incredible strength."

Again, by Drayton, in the 24th song of his Polyolbion:

"The one o'er *Isell's* banks the ancient Saxons taught;
"At *Over-Isell* rests, the other did apply —."

And in King Richard II. a thought, in part the same, occurs, Act II. Sc. II.:

"—— the task he undertakes
"Is numb'ring sands, and *drinking oceans dry*."

I'll do't.—Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?

But in an old Latin account of Denmark and the neighbouring provinces, I find the names of several rivers little differing from *Esil*, or *Eisell*, in spelling or pronunciation. Such are the *Essa*, the *Oesil*, and some others. The word, like many more, may indeed be irrecoverably corrupted; but, I must add, that few authors later than Chaucer or Skelton made use of *eysel* for *vinegar*: nor has Shakspeare employed it in any other of his plays. The poet might have written the *Weisel*, a considerable river which falls into the Baltick ocean, and could not be unknown to any prince of Denmark. STEEVENS.

On the phrase *drink up* no stress can be laid, for our poet has employed the same expression in his 114th Sonnet, without any idea of *entirely exhausting*, and merely as synonymous to *drink*:

"Or whether doth my mind, being crown'd with you,
"*Drink up* the monarch's plague, this flattery?"

Again, in the same Sonnet:

"——'tis flattery in my seeing,
"And my great mind most kingly *drinks* it *up*."

Again, in Timon of Athens:

"And how his silence *drinks up* his applause."

In Shakspeare's time, as at present, to *drink up*, often meant no more than simply to drink. So, in Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598: "*Sorbire*, to sip or *sup up* any drink." In like manner we sometimes say, "when you have *swallowed down* this potion," though we mean no more than—when you have swallowed this potion.

Yet although in my former edition I adopted Mr. Theobald's interpretation, I am now convinced that Mr. Steevens's is the true one. This sort of hyperbole was common among our ancient poets. So, in Eastward Hoe, 1609:

"Come drink up Rhine, Thames, and Meander dry,"

So also, in Greene's Orlando Furioso, 1599:

"Else would I set my mouth to Tygris' streames,
"And drinke up overflowing Euphrates."

Again, in Marlowe's Jew of Malta:

"As sooner shalt thou drink the ocean dry,
"Than conquer Malta." MALONE.

Our author has a similar exaggeration in Troilus and Cressida, Act III. Sc. II.:

"When we (i. e. lovers) vow to weep seas, live in fire, eat rocks, tame tigers," &c.

In Chaucer's Romaunt of the Rose, we find the following lines:

"He underfongeth a grete paine,
"That undertaketh to drink up Seine." BOSWELL.

Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us; till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thoul't mouth,
Il l rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness [9]:
And thus a while the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclos'd [1],
His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir;
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever [2]: But it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*

9 This is mere madness:] This speech in the first folio is given to the King. Malone.

1 When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,] To *disclose* was anciently used for to *hatch*. So, in The Booke of Huntynge, Hawkyng, Fyshing, &c. bl. l. no date: "First they ben eges; and after they ben *disclosed*, haukes; and commonly goshaukes ben *disclosed* as sone as the choughes." To *exclude* is the technical term at present. During three days after the pigeon has *hatched* her *couplets*, (for she lays no more than *two* eggs,) she never quits her nest, except for a few moments in quest of a little food for herself; as all her young require in that early state, is to be kept warm, an office which she never entrusts to the male. Steevens.

The young nestlings of the pigeon, when first disclosed, are callow, only covered with a yellow down: and for that reason stand in need of being cherished by the warmth of the hen, to protect them from the chillness of the ambient air, for a considerable time after they are hatched. Heath.

The word *disclose* has already occurred in a sense nearly allied to *hatch*, in this play:

"And I do doubt, the hatch and the *disclose*
"Will be some danger." Malone.

2 What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever:] So, in A Midsummer-Night's Dream, Helena says to her rival—

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon
him.— [*Exit Horatio.*
Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
[*To Laertes.*
We'll put the matter to the present push.—
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.—
This grave shall have a living monument:
An hour of quiet shortly[3] shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A Hall in the Castle.

Enter Hamlet and Horatio.

Ham. So much for this, sir: now shall you see*
the other;—
You do remember all the circumstance?
Hor. Remember it, my lord!
Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep[4]: methought, I lay

* First folio, *let me see.*

"——do not be so bitter with me,
"*I evermore did love you*, Hermia." Steevens.

3 — shortly —] The first quarto erroneously reads—*thirty*. The second and third—*thereby*. The folio—*shortly*. Steevens.

4 Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep: &c.] So, in Troilus and Cressida:

"Within my soul there doth commence a fight,
"Of this strange nature," &c.

The Hystorie of Hamblet, bl. l. furnished our author with the scheme of sending the Prince to England, and with most of the circumstances described in this scene:

[After the death of Polonius] "Fengon [the King in the present play] could not content himselfe, but still his mind gave him that the foole [Hamlet] would play him some trick of legerdemaine. And in that conceit, seeking to bee rid of him, deter-

Worse than the mutines in the bilboes [5]. Rashly,
And prais'd be rashness for it,—Let us know,

mined to find the meanes to doe it by the aid of a stranger, making the king of England minister of his massacrous resolution; to whom he purposed to send him, and by letters desire him to put him to death.

"Now to beare him company, were assigned two of Fengon's faithful ministers, bearing letters ingraved in wood, that contained Hamlet's death, in such sort as he had advertised the king of England. But the subtil Danish prince, (being at sea,) whilst his companions slept, having read the letters, and knowing his uncle's great treason, with the wicked and villainous mindes of the two courtiers, that led him to the slaughter, raced out the letters that concerned his death, and instead thereof graved others, with commission to the king of England to hang his two companions; and not content to turn the death they had devised against him, upon their own neckes, wrote further, that king Fengon willed him to give his daughter to Hamblet in marriage." *Hyst. of Hamblet*, signat. G 2.

From this narrative it appears that the faithful ministers of Fengon were not unacquainted with the import of the letters they bore. Shakspeare, who has followed the story pretty closely, probably meant to describe their representatives, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, as equally guilty; as confederating with the King to deprive Hamlet of his life. So that his procuring their execution, though certainly not absolutely necessary to his own safety, does not appear to have been a wanton and unprovoked cruelty, as Mr. Steevens has supposed in his very ingenious observations on the general character and conduct of the prince throughout this piece.

In the conclusion of his drama the poet has entirely deviated from the fabulous history, which in other places he has frequently followed.

After Hamblet's arrival in England, (for no sea-fight is mentioned,) "the king, (says The Hystory of Hamblet,) admiring the young prince,—gave him his daughter in marriage, according to the counterfeit letters by him devised; and the next day caused the two servants of Fengon to be executed, to satisfy, as he thought, the king's desire." *Hyst. of Hamb.* Ibid.

Hamlet, however, returned to Denmark, without marrying the king of England's daughter, who, it should seem, had only been *betrothed* to him. When he arrived in his native country, he made the courtiers drunk, and having burnt them to death, by setting fire to the banqueting-room wherein they sat, he went into Fengon's chamber, and killed him, "giving him (says the

Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well [6],
When our deep plots do pall [7]: and that should
teach * us,

* Quarto, *learn*.

relater) such a violent blowe upon the chine of the neck, that he cut his head clean from the shoulders." *Ibid*. signat. F 3.

He is afterwards said to have been crowned king of Denmark. MALONE.

I apprehend that a critick and a juryman are bound to form their opinions on what they see and hear in the cause before them, and not to be influenced by extraneous particulars unsupported by legal evidence in open court. I persist, in observing, that from Shakspeare's drama no proofs of the guilt of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern can be collected. They may be convicted by the black letter history; but if the tragedy forbears to criminate, it has no right to sentence them. This is sufficient for the commentator's purpose. It is not his office to interpret the plays of Shakspeare according to the novels on which they are founded, novels which the poet sometimes followed, but as often materially deserted. Perhaps he never confined himself strictly to the plan of any one of his originals. His negligence of poetick justice is notorious; nor can we expect that he who was content to sacrifice the pious Ophelia, should have been more scrupulous about the worthless lives of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Therefore, I still assert that, in the tragedy before us, their deaths appear both wanton and unprovoked; and the critick, like Bayes, must have recourse to somewhat *long before the beginning of this play*, to justify the conduct of its hero. STEEVENS.

5 — MUTINES in the bilboes.] *Mutines*, the French word for seditious or disobedient fellows in the army or fleet. *Bilboes*, the *ship's prison*. JOHNSON.

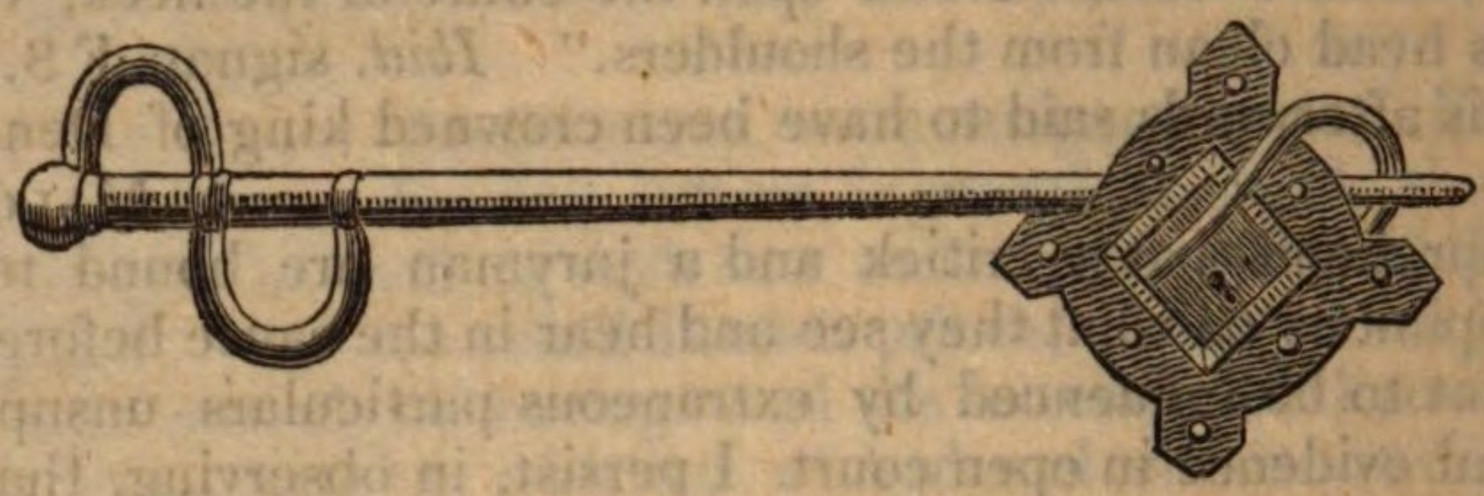
To *mutine* was formerly used for to *mutiny*. See p. 395, n. 6. So *mutine*, for *mutiner*, or *mutineer:* "un homme *mutin*," Fr. a mutinous or seditious person. In The Misfortunes of Arthur, a tragedy, 1587, the adjective is used:

"Suppresseth *mutin* force, and practicke fraud." MALONE.

The *bilboes* is a bar of iron with fetters annexed to it, by which mutinous or disorderly sailors were anciently linked together. The word is derived from *Bilboa*, a place in Spain where instruments of steel were fabricated in the utmost perfection. To understand Shakspeare's allusion completely, it should be known, that as these fetters connect the legs of the offenders very close together, their attempts to rest must be as fruitless as those of Hamlet, in whose mind *there was a kind of fighting that would not let him sleep*. Every motion of one must disturb his partner in confine-

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will [8].

ment. The *bilboes* are still shown in the Tower of London, among the other spoils of the Spanish Armada. The following is the figure of them:



STEEVENS.

[6] ——— rashly,
And prais'd be rashness for it,—Let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,

When, &c.] Hamlet delivering an account of his escape, begins with saying—That he *rashly*——and then is carried into a reflection upon the weakness of human wisdom. I rashly——praised be raslness for it—*Let us* not think these events casual, but *let us know*, that is, *take notice and remember*, that we sometimes succeed by *indiscretion* when we *fail* by *deep plots*, and infer the perpetual superintendance and *agency* of the *Divinity*. The observation is just, and will be allowed by every human being, who shall reflect on the course of his own life. JOHNSON.

This passage, I think, should be thus distributed:

——— Rashly
(And prais'd be rashness, for it lets us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do fail; and that should teach us,
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will;—
Hor. That is most certain.)
Ham. Up from my cabin, &c.

So that *rashly* may be joined in construction with—*in the dark grop'd I to find out them.* TYRWHITT,

[7] When our DEEP plots do PALL:] Thus the first quarto, 1604. The editor of the next quarto, for *pall*, substituted *fall*. The folio reads,—

"When our *dear* plots do *paule*."

Mr. Pope and the subsequent editors read,—

"When our deep plots do *fail*:——

but *pall* and *fail* are by no means likely to have been confounded. I have therefore adhered to the old copies. In Antony and Cleopatra our poet has used the participle:

Hor. That is most certain.
Ham. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me [9], in the dark
Grop'd I to find out them: had my desire;
Finger'd their packet; and, in fine, withdrew
To mine own room again: making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal *
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,
A † royal knavery; an exact command,—
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life [1],—
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated [2],

* Quarto, *unfold*. † First folio, *oh*.

"I'll never follow thy *pall'd* fortunes more." MALONE.
Again, in one of Barnaby Googe's Sonnets, 1563:
"Torment my *pauled* spryght." STEEVENS.

[8] There's a divinity that SHAPES OUR ENDS,
ROUGH-HEW them how we will.] Dr. Farmer informs me, that these words are merely technical. A wool-man, butcher, and dealer in *skewers*, lately observed to him, that his nephew, (an idle lad) could only *assist* him in making them; "— he could *rough-hew* them, but I was obliged to *shape their ends*." To shape the ends of *wool-skewers*, i. e. to *point* them, requires a degree of skill; any one can *rough-hew* them. Whoever recollects the profession of Shakspeare's father, will admit that his son might be no stranger to such terms. I have frequently seen packages of wool pinn'd up with *skewers*. STEEVENS.

[9] My SEA-GOWN scarf'd about me.] This appears to have been the usual dress of seamen in Shakspeare's time. So in the Puritan: "The excuse stuck upon my tongue like ship-pitch upon a *mariner's gown*." So also in Henslowe's MSS. "Lent upon a *sea-gowne* of captain Swanes xvs." MALONE.

[1] With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,] With *such causes of terror*, rising from my character and designs. JOHNSON.
A *bug* was no less a terrifick being than a goblin. So, in Spenser's Fairy Queen, book ii. c. iii.:
"As ghastly *bug* their haire an end does reare."
We call it at present a *bugbear*. STEEVENS.

[2] — no leisure BATED,] *Bated* for *allowed*. To *abate* signifies to *deduct*; this deduction, when applied to the person in whose

No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off[3].

Hor. Is't possible?

Ham. Here's the commission; read it at more leisure.

But wilt thou hear now* how I did proceed?

Hor. I beseech you.

Ham. Being thus benetted round with villanies†,
Or‡ I could make[4] a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play[5];—I sat me down;

* First folio, *hear me.* † Quarto, and first folio, *villaines.*
‡ First folio, *Ere.*

favour it is made, is called an *allowance.* Hence he takes the liberty of using *bated* for *allowed.* WARBURTON.

No leisure bated—means, without any *abatement* or intermission of time. MALONE.

[3] That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,—
My head should be struck off.] From what original our author derived this incident of detecting the letter, and exchanging it for another, I am unqualified to determine. A similar stratagem, however, occurs in Andrew of Wyntown's Cronykil, b. vi. ch. xiii.

" The Prest that purs opnyd swne,
" And fand in it that letter dwne.
" That he opnyd, and red the payne,
" The berere of it for to be slayne.
" That Letter away than pwte he qwyte,
" And sone ane othir than couth he wryte—
" He cloysed thys Letter curywsly,
" And in the purs all prewely
" He pwt it quhare the tothir was." v. 188, & seq.

The words of the first letter are,—

Visa litera, lator illius moriatur.

Thus also Hamlet:

" —— That, on the supervise,—
" He should the bearers put to sudden death."

The story, however varied, perhaps originated from the Bellerophontis literæ. STEEVENS.

[4] OR I could make —] *Or* in old English signified *before.* See King John, Act IV. Sc. III. MALONE.

[5] Being thus benetted round with villanies,
Or I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play;] Hamlet is telling how luckily every thing fell out; he groped out their commission in the dark

Devis'd a new commission: wrote it fair:
I once did hold it, as our statists do [6],
A baseness to write fair [7], and labour'd much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service [8]: Wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?

Hor. Ay, good my lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,—
As England was his faithful tributary;

without waking them; he found himself doomed to immediate destruction. Something was to be done for his preservation. An expedient occurred, not produced by the comparison of one method with another, or by a regular deduction of consequences, but before he "could make a prologue to his brains, they had begun the play." Before he could summon his faculties, and propose to himself what should be done, a complete scheme of action presented itself to him. His mind operated before he had excited it. This appears to me to be the meaning. JOHNSON.

[6] — as our STATISTS do,] A *statist* is a *statesman*. So, in Shirley's Humorous Courtier, 1640:

" —— that he is wise, a *statist*."

Again, in Ben Jonson's Magnetick Lady:

" Will screw you out a secret from a *statist*." STEEVENS.

Most of the great men of Shakspeare's times, whose autographs have been preserved, wrote very bad hands; their secretaries very neat ones. BLACKSTONE.

[7] I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair,] " I have in my time, (says Montaigne) seene some, who by writing did earnestly get both their titles and living, to disavow their apprentissage, marre their pen, and affect the ignorance of *so vulgar a qualitie*." *Florio's translation*, 1603, p. 125. RITSON.

So, in the Woman Hater, by Fletcher:

" *Gent.* 'Tis well: and you have learned to write a bad hand, that the readers may take pains for it.—Your lordship hath a secretary that can write fair when you purpose to be understood." BOSWELL.

[8] — yeoman's service:] The meaning, I believe, is, *This yeomanly qualification was a most useful servant, or yeoman, to me;* i. e. did me eminent service. The ancient *yeomen* were famous for their military valour. " These were the good archers in times past, (says Sir Thomas Smith,) and the stable troop of footmen that affraide all France." STEEVENS.

As love between them like the palm might * flourish [9];
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a comma 'tween their amities [1];
And many such like as's of great charge [2],—

* First folio, *As the palm should.*

9 — like the palm might flourish;] This comparison is scriptural: "The righteous shall flourish like a palm-tree."
Psalm xcii. 11. STEEVENS.

1 As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
And stand a COMMA 'tween their amities;] The expression of our author is, like many of his phrases, sufficiently constrained and affected, but it is not incapable of explanation. The *comma* is the note of *connection* and continuity of sentences; the *period* is the note of *abruption* and disjunction. Shakspeare had it perhaps in his mind to write,—That unless England complied with the mandate, war should put a *period* to their amity; he altered his mode of diction, and thought that, in an opposite sense, he might put, that "peace should stand a *comma* between their amities." This is not an easy style; but is it not the style of Shakspeare?
JOHNSON.

2 — AS's of great charge,] *Asses* heavily *loaded*. A quibble is intended between *as* the conditional particle, and *ass* the beast of burthen. That *charg'd* anciently signified *loaded*, may be proved from the following passage in The Widow's Tears, by Chapman, 1612:

"Thou must be the *ass charg'd with crowns*, to make way."
JOHNSON.

Shakspeare has so many quibbles of his own to answer for, that there are those who think it hard he should be charged with others which perhaps he never thought of. STEEVENS.

Though the first and obvious meaning of these words certainly is, "*many similar* adjurations, or monitory injunctions, *of great weight and importance*," yet Dr. Johnson's notion of a quibble being also in the poet's thoughts, is supported by two other passages of Shakspeare, in which *asses* are introduced as usually employed in the carriage of gold, a *charge* of no small weight:

"He shall but bear them, as the *ass bears gold*,
"To groan and sweat under the business."
Julius Cæsar.

Again, in Measure for Measure:

"—— like an *ass*, whose back with *ingots* bows,
"Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey,
"And death unloads thee."

That, on the view and knowing * of these contents,
Without debatement further, more, or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd [3].

Hor. How was this seal'd?

Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant †;
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal [4]:
Folded the writ up in form of the other;
Subscrib'd it; gave't the impression; plac'd it safely,
The changeling never known [5]: Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Ham. Why, man [6], they did make love to this employment;

* First folio, *know.* † First folio, *ordinate.*

In further support of his observation, it should be remembered, that the letter *s* in the particle *as* in the midland counties usually pronounced hard, as in the pronoun *us*. Dr. Johnson himself always pronounced the particle *as* hard, and so I have no doubt did Shakspeare. It is so pronounced in Warwickshire at this day. The first folio acordingly has—*assis*.

So, in The Return from Parnassus, in a dialogue between Academicus and Echo:

"*Acad.* ——What is the reason that
"I should not be as fortunate as he?
"*Echo. Asse* he."

So also, in Lilly's Mother Bombie: "*Sti.* But as for Regio,—*Memp.* As for Dromio,—*Half. Asse* for you all four." Malone.

Again, in the Chronicle History of King Lear, signat. L.

"*Second Watchman. Asse* for example.

"*First Watchman.* I hope you do not call me *Asse* by craft, neighbour," Boswell.

[3] Not SHRIVING-time allow'd.] i. e. without time for confession of their sins: another proof of Hamlet's christian-like disposition. See Romeo and Juliet, Act IV. Sc. II. Steevens.

[4] — the MODEL of that Danish seal:] The *model* is in old language the *copy*. The signet was formed in imitation of the Danish seal. See King Richard II. Act III. Sc. II. Malone.

[5] The CHANGELING never known:] A *changeling* is a *child* which the fairies are supposed to leave in the room of that which they steal. Johnson.

They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow[7]:
'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, think thee[8], stand me now upon—
He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother;
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes;
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage—is't not perfect conscience,
To quit him[9] with this arm? and is't not to be damn'd,
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from England,
What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life no more than to say, one.
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I'll count his favours[1]:

[6] Why, man, &c.] This line is omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

[7] — by their own INSINUATION] *Insinuation*, for 'corruptly obtruding themselves into his service.' WARBURTON.

By their having insinuated or thrust themselves into the employment. MALONE.

[8] — THINK thee,] i. e. bethink thee; the folio reads "*think'st* thee." MALONE.

[9] To QUIT him —] To *requite* him; to pay him his due. JOHNSON.

This passage, as well as the three following speeches, is not in the quartos. STEEVENS.

[1] — I'll COUNT his favours:] Thus the folio. Mr. Rowe first made the alteration [reading *court*] which is perhaps unnecessary.

But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace; who comes here?

Enter Osric.

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this water-fly[2]?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him: He hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess: 'Tis a chough[3]; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

I'll *count* his favours, may mean—*I will make account* of them, i. e. reckon upon them, value them. Steevens.

What favours has Hamlet received from Laertes, that he was to make account of?—I have no doubt but we should read:

—— I'll *court* his *favour*. M. Mason.

Hamlet may refer to former civilities of Laertes, and weigh them against his late intemperance of behaviour; or may *count* on such kindness as he expected to receive in consequence of a meditated reconciliation.

It should be observed, however, that in ancient language to *count* and *recount* were synonymous. So, in the Troy Book, (Caxton's edit.) "I am comen hether unto yow for refuge, and to telle and *count* my sorowes." Steevens.

[2] —Dost know this water-fly?] A *water-fly* skips up and down upon the surface of the water, without any apparent purpose or reason, and is thence the proper emblem of a busy trifler. Johnson.

Water-fly is in Troilus and Cressida used as a term of reproach, for *contemptible from smallness of size:* "How (says Thersites) the poor world is pestered with such *water-flies; diminutives of nature.*" *Water-flies* are *gnats*. This insect in Chaucer denotes a thing of no value. Canterbury Tales, v. 17,203, Mr. Tyrwhitt's edition:

"Not worth to thee as in comparison
"*The mountance* [*value*] *of a gnat.*" Holt White.

[3] — Tis a chough;] A kind of jackdaw. Johnson.

Osr. Sweet lord, if your lordship * were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit: Your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. But yet, methinks, it is very sultry and hot [5]; or my complexion [6]——

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry [7],—as 'twere,—I cannot tell how.—My lord †, his majesty bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head: Sir, this is the matter,—

Ham. I beseech you, remember——

[*Hamlet moves him to put on his Hat.*

Osr. Nay, good my lord; for my ease, in good faith [8]. Sir [9], here is newly come to court, Laertes:

* First folio, *friendship.* † First folio, *But my lord.*

[5] But yet, methinks, it is very sultry, &c.] Hamlet is here playing over the same farce with Osric, which he had formerly done with Polonius. STEEVENS.

[6] — OR my complexion —] The folios read—*for* my complexion. STEEVENS.

[7] Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,]

——igniculum brumæ si tempore poscas,
Accipit endromidem; si dixeris æstuo, sudat. *Juv.*

MALONE.

[8] Nay, good my lord; FOR MY EASE, in good faith.] This seems to have been the affected phrase of the time. Thus, in Marston's Malcontent, 1604: "I beseech you, sir, be covered.—No, in good faith *for my ease*." And in other places. FARMER.

It appears to have been the common language of ceremony in our author's time. "Why do you stand *bareheaded?* (says one of the speakers in Florio's Second Frutes, 1591,) you do yourself wrong. Pardon me, good sir, (replies his friend;) I do it *for my ease*."

Again, in A New Way to pay old Debts, by Massinger, 1633:

"——— Is't *for your ease*
"You keep your hat off?" MALONE.

believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences [1], of very soft society, and great showing: Indeed, to speak feelingly [2] of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry [3], for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see [4].

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you [5];—though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would dizzy the arithmetick of memory; and yet but raw neither [6], in respect of his quick sail. But,

9 Sir, &c.] The folio omits this and the following fourteen speeches; and in their place substitutes only, "Sir, you are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is at his weapon."

STEEVENS.

1 —full of most excellent differences,] Full of *distinguishing* excellencies. JOHNSON.

2 —speak FEELINGLY —] The first quarto reads—*sellingly*. So, in another of our author's plays:

"To things of sale a *seller's* praise belongs." STEEVENS.

3 —the card or calendar of gentry,] The general preceptor of elegance; the *card* by which a gentleman is to direct his course; the *calendar* by which he is to choose his time, that what he does may be both excellent and seasonable. JOHNSON.

4 —for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.] *You shall find him containing* and comprising every *quality* which a *gentleman* would desire to *contemplate* for imitation. I know not but it should be read, *You shall find him the continent*. JOHNSON.

5 Sir, his definement, &c.] This is designed as a specimen, and ridicule of the court-jargon amongst the *precieux* of that time. The sense in English is, "Sir, he suffers nothing in your account of him, though to enumerate his good qualities particularly would be endless; yet when we had done our best, it would still come short of him. However, in strictness of truth, he is a great genius, and of a character so rarely to be met with, that to find any thing like him we must look into his mirrour, and his imitators will appear no more than his shadows." WARBURTON.

6 —and yet but RAW neither.] We should read—*slow*.

WARBURTON.

I believe *raw* to be the right word; it is a word of great latitude; *raw* signifies *unripe*, *immature*, thence *unformed*, *imperfect*, *unskilful*. The best account of him would be *imperfect*, in respect of his quick sail. The phrase *quick sail* was, I suppose, a proverbial term for *activity of mind*. JOHNSON.

in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article [7]; and his infusion of such dearth [8] and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirrour; and, who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really [9].

7 —a soul of great ARTICLE:] This is obscure. I once thought it might have been, 'a soul of great *altitude;*' but, I suppose. a soul of great *article,*' means 'a soul of *large comprehension, of many contents;*' the particulars of an inventory are called *articles.* JOHNSON.

8 —of such DEARTH—] *Dearth* is *dearness, value, price.* And his internal qualities of such value and rarity. JOHNSON.

9 Is't not possible to understand in ANOTHER tongue? You will do't, sir, really.] Of this interrogatory remark the sense is very obscure. The question may mean, 'Might not all this be understood in plainer language.' But then, 'you will do it, sir, really,' seems to have no use, for who could doubt but plain language would be intelligible? I would therefore read, 'Is't *possible not to be understood in a mother tongue?* You will do it, sir, really.' JOHNSON.

Suppose [as Mr. Jennens has remarked] we were to point the passage thus: "Is't not possible to understand? In another tongue you will do it, sir, really."

The speech seems to be addressed to Osric, who is puzzled by Hamlet's imitation of his own affected language. STEEVENS.

Theobald has silently substituted *rarely* for *really.* I think Horatio's speech is addressed to Hamlet. *Another tongue* does not mean, as I conceive, *plainer language,* (as Dr. Johnson supposed,) but "language so fantastical and affected as to have the appearance of a *foreign tongue:*" and in the following words Horatio, I think, means to praise Hamlet for imitating this kind of babble so happily. I suspect, however, that the poet wrote—Is't *possible not* to understand in *a mother tongue?*

Since this note was written, I have found the very same error in Bacon's Advancement of Learning, 4to. 1605, b. ii. p. 60: "—the art of grammar, whereof the use in *another* tongue is

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all his golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know, you are not ignorant——

Ham. I would, you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me [1];—Well, sir.

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is——

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence [2]; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed [3] he's unfellowed.

Ham. What's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons: but, well.

Osr. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has impawned [4], as I take it, six French rapiers and

small, in a foreine tongue more." The author in his table of Errata says, it should have been printed—in *mother* tongue.

MALONE.

[1] —if you did, it would not much APPROVE me;] If you knew I was not ignorant, your esteem would not much advance my reputation. To *approve*, is to *recommend to approbation*.

JOHNSON.

[2] I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him, &c.] I dare not pretend to know him, lest I should pretend to an equality: no man can completely know another, but by knowing himself, which is the utmost extent of human wisdom. JOHNSON.

[3] —in his meed—] In his excellence. JOHNSON.

See Henry VI. Part III. Act IV. Sc. III. MALONE.

[4] —impawned,] Thus the quarto 1604. The folio reads—*impon'd*. *Pignare* in Italian signifies both to *pawn*, and to *lay a wager*. MALONE.

poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers [5], and so [6]: Three of the carriages, in faith, are very

Perhaps it should be, *deponed*. So, Hudibras:

" I would upon this cause *depone*,
" As much as any I have known."

But perhaps *imponed* is *pledged*, *impawned*, so spelt to ridicule the affectation of uttering English words with French pronunciation. JOHNSON.

To *impone* is certainly right, and means to *put down*, to *stake*, from the verb *impono*. RITSON.

5 —hangers,] The word *hangers* has been misunderstood. That part of the girdle or belt by which the sword was suspended, was in our poet's time called *the hangers*. See Minsheu's Dictionary, 1617: " The *hangers* of a sword. G. Pendants d'espée, L. Subcingulum," &c. So, in an inventory found among the papers of Hamlet Clarke, an attorney of a court of record in London, in the year 1611, and printed in The Gentleman's Magazine, vol. lviii. p. 111:

" *Item*, One payre of girdle and *hangers*, of silver purle, and cullored silke.

" *Item*, One payre of girdler and *hangers* upon white sattene."

The hangers ran into an oblique direction from the middle of the forepart of the girdle across the left thigh, and were attached to the girdle behind. MALONE.

" —hangers." Under this term were comprehended four graduated straps, &c. that hung down in a belt on each side of its receptacle for the sword. I write this, with a most gorgeous belt, at least as ancient as the time of James I. before me. It is of crimson velvet embroidered with gold, and had belonged to the Somerset family.

In Massinger's Fatal Dowry, Liladam (who, when arrested as a gentleman, avows himself to have been a tailor,) says:

" ——— This rich sword
" Grew suddenly out of a tailor's bodkin;
" These *hangers* from my vails and fees in hell:" &c.

i. e. the tailor's *hell;* the place into which shreds and remnants are thrown.

Again, in The Birth of Merlin, 1662:

" He has a fair sword, but his *hangers* are fallen."

Again, in Rhodon and Iris, 1631:

" ——— a rapier
" Hatch'd with gold, with hilt and *hangers* of the new fashion."

The same word occurs in the eleventh Iliad, as translated by Chapman:

" The scaberd was of silver plate, with golden *hangers* graet."

Mr. Pope mistook the meaning of this term, conceiving it to signify—" short pendulous broad swords." STEEVENS.

dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Hor. I knew, you must be edified by the margent [6], ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be more german [7] to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides; I would, it might be hangers till then. But, on: Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish: Why is this impawned, as you call it?

Osr. The king, sir, hath laid [8], that in a dozen

[6] —you must be edified by the MARGENT,] Dr. Warburton very properly observes, that in the old books the gloss or comment was usually printed on the margent of the leaf. So, in Decker's Honest Whore, Part II. 1630:

" ——— I read
" Strange comments in those *margins* of your looks."

Again, in The Contention betwyxte Churchyeard and Camell, &c. 1560:

" A solempne processe at a blusshe
" He quoted here and there,
" With matter in the *margent* set," &c.

This speech is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

[7] —more GERMAN] More *a-kin*. JOHNSON.

So, in The Winter's Tale: " Those that are *german* to him, though removed fifty times, shall come under the hangman."

STEEVENS.

[8] The king, sir, hath laid,] This wager I do not understand. In a dozen passes one must exceed the other more or less than three hits. Nor can I comprehend, how, in a dozen, there can be twelve to nine. This passage is of no importance; it is sufficient that there was a wager. The quarto has the passage as it stands. The folio—*He hath one twelve for mine*. JOHNSON.

As three or four complete pages would scarcely hold the remarks already printed, together with those which have lately been communicated to me in MS. on this very unimportant passage, I shall avoid both partiality and tediousness, by the omission of them all. I therefore leave the conditions of this wager to be adjusted by the members of Brookes's, or the Jockey-Club at Newmarket,

passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits; he hath laid, on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How, if I answer, no?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: If it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me: let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

Osr. Shall I deliver you so *?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship.

[*Exit.*

Ham. Yours, yours.—He does well, to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head [9].

* First folio, *Shall I deliver you e'en so.*

who on such subjects may prove the most enlightened commentators, and most successfully bestir themselves in the cold unpoetick dabble of calculation. Steevens.

9 This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.] I see no particular propriety in the image of the lapwing. Osric did not run till he had done his business. We may read—'This lapwing *ran* away.'—That is, 'That fellow was full of unimportant bustle from his birth.' Johnson.

The same image occurs in Ben Jonson's Staple of News:

"———— and coachmen
"To mount their boxes reverently, and drive
"Like *lapwings with a shell upon their heads*,
"Thorough the streets."

And I have since met with it in several other plays. The meaning, I believe, is—This is a *forward* fellow. So, in The White Devil, or Vittoria Corombona, 1612:

Ham. He did comply with his dug, before he sucked it [1]. Thus has he (and many more of the same breed [2], that, I know, the drossy age dotes on,)

" *Forward* lapwing,
" He flies with the shell on's head."

Again, in Greene's Never too Late, 1616: "Are you no sooner hatched, with the *lapwing*, but you will run away with *the shell on your head?*"

Again, in Revenge for Honour, by Chapman:

" Boldness enforces youth to hard atchievements
" Before their time; makes them run forth like *lapwings*
" From their warm nest, part of the *shell yet sticking*
" Unto their downy heads." STEEVENS.

I believe, Hamlet means to say that Osric is bustling and impetuous, and yet " but *raw* in respect of his quick sail." So, in The Character of an Oxford Incendiary, 1643: "This *lapwing* incendiary ran away *half-hatched* from Oxford, to raise a combustion in Scotland."

In Meres's Wit's Treasury, 1598, we have the same image expressed exactly in our poet's words " As *the lapwing runneth away with the shell on her head*, as soon as she is hatched," &c. MALONE.

[1] He did COMPLY with his dug, &c.] Thus the folio. The quarto 1604 reads—*A* [i. e. *he*] did, sir, with his dug, &c. For *comply* Dr. Warburton and the subsequent editors, read—*compliment*. MALONE.

I doubt whether any alteration be necessary. Shakspeare seems to have used *comply* in the sense in which we use the verb *compliment*. See before, Act II. Sc. II.: " let me *comply* with you in this garb." TYRWHITT.

Comply is right. So, in Fuller's Historie of the Holy Warre, p. 80: " Some weeks were spent in *complying*, entertainments, and visiting holy places—." REED.

Again, ibid. p. 219: " But sure, so cunning a companion had long conversed with—and Princes, as appeareth by his *complying* carriage," &c. STEEVENS.

So, to *recomply* is used in the sense of returning a *compliment*:

" Then stept I to the man of mysteries
" With careful *compliment*, least to offend;
" When he eftsoones with reverend arise
" Did *recomplie* me like a perfect friend."
A Fig for Fortune by A. C. [*Antony Copley*] 1596. MALONE.

[2] —and MANY more of the same BREED,] The first folio has—

only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter [3]; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions [4]; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out [5].

and *mine* more of the same *beavy*. The second folio—and *nine* more, &c. Perhaps the last is the true reading. STEEVENS.

There may be a propriety in *bevy*, as he has just called him a *lapwing*. TOLLET.

"Many more of the same *breed*," is the reading of the quarto 1604. MALONE.

[3] — OUTWARD habit of encounter;] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*out of an* habit of encounter. STEEVENS.

"Outward habit of encounter," is exterior politeness of address; in allusion to Osric's last speech. HENLEY.

We should, I think, read—*an* outward habit, &c. MALONE.

[4] — a kind of YESTY collection, which carries them through and through the most FOND and winnowed opinions;] This passage in the quarto stands thus:—"They have got out of the habit of encounter, a kind of misty collection, which carries them through and through the most profane and trennowned opinions." If this printer preserved any traces of the original, our author wrote "the most *sane* and *renowned* opinions;" which is better than *fanned* and *winnowed*.

The meaning is, "these men have got the cant of the day, a superficial readiness of slight and cursory conversation, a kind of frothy collection of fashionable prattle, which yet carries them through the most select and approving judgments. This airy facility of talk sometimes imposes upon wise men."

Who has not seen this observation verified? JOHNSON.

The quarto 1604 reads, "— dotes on; *only* got the tune of the time, and out of *an* habit," &c. and—not *misty* but *histy;* the folio, rightly, *yesty:* the same quarto has not *trennowned*, but *trennowed* (a corruption of *winnowed*,) for which (according to the usual process,) the next quarto gave *trennowned*. *Fond* and *winnowed* is the reading of the folio. MALONE.

Fond is evidently opposed to *winnowed*. *Fond*, in the language of Shakspeare's age, signified *foolish*. So, in The Merchant of Venice:

"Thou naughty jailer, why art thou so *fond*," &c.

Winnowed is *sifted, examined*. The sense is then, that their conversation was yet successful enough to make them passable not only with the weak, but with those of sounder judgment. The same opposition in terms is visible in the reading which the

[*Enter a Lord.*

Lord. My lord [6] his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: He sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes, they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king, and queen, and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

quartos offer. *Profane* and *vulgar* is opposed to *trenowned*, or *thrice renowned*. Steevens.

Fanned and *winnowed* seems right to me. Both words, *winnowed*, *fand* * and drest, occur together in Markham's English Husbandman, p. 117. So do *fan'd* and *winnow'd*, *fanned*, and *winnowed*, in his Husbandry, p. 18, 76, and 77. So, Shakspeare mentions together the *fan* and *wind*, in Troilus and Cressida, Act V. Sc. III. Tollet.

On considering this passage, it always appeared to me that we ought to read, "the most *sound* and winnowed opinions:" and I have been confirmed in that conjecture by a passage I lately met with in Howel's Letters, where speaking of a man merely contemplative, he says: "Besides he may want judgement in the choice of his authors, and knows not how to turn his hand either in weighing or *winnowing the soundest opinions*." Book iii. letter viii.

M. Mason.

[5] — do but blow them, &c.] These men of show, without solidity, are like bubbles raised from soap and water, which dance, and glitter, and please the eye, but if you extend them, by blowing hard, separate into a mist; so if you oblige these specious talkers to extend their compass of conversation, they at once discover the tenuity of their intellects. Johnson.

[6] My lord, &c.] All that passes between Hamlet and this Lord is omitted in the folio. Steevens.

* So written without the apostrophe, and easily might in MS. be mistaken for *fond*.

Lord. The queen desires you, to use some gentle entertainment[7] to Laertes, before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*]

Hor. You will lose this wager *, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds[8]. But † thou would'st not think, how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord,——

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving[9], as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it[1]: I will forestal their repair hither, and say, you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury; there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all: Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows, what is't to leave betimes[2]? Let be.

* First folio omits *this wager*. † First folio omits *But*.

7 — gentle entertainment —] Mild and temperate conversation. JOHNSON.

8 — I shall win at THE ODDS.] I shall succeed with the advantage that I am allowed. MALONE.

9 — a kind of GAIN-GIVING,] *Gain-giving* is the same as *misgiving*. STEEVENS.

1 If your mind dislike any thing, obey it:]

——— Urgent præsagia mille
Funeris, et nigræ præcedunt nubila mortis.

With these presages of future evils arising in the mind, the poet has fore-run many events which are to happen at the conclusions of his plays; and sometimes so particularly, that even the circumstances of calamity are minutely hinted at, as in the instance of Juliet, who tells her lover from the window, that he appears *like one dead in the bottom of a tomb*. The supposition that the genius of the mind gave an alarm before approaching dissolution, is a very ancient one, and perhaps can never be totally driven out: yet it must be allowed the merit of adding beauty to poetry, however injurious it may sometimes prove to the weak and superstitious. STEEVENS.

Enter King, Queen, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, and Attendants with Foils, &c.

KING. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The King puts the Hand of LAERTES into that of HAMLET.*

HAM. Give me your pardon, sir [3]: I've done you wrong;

[2] Since no man, of aught he leaves, knows, what is't to leave betimes?] This, as Warburton has stated, is the reading of the first quarto, 1604. The folio reads,—*Since no man* has *ought* of what *he leaves. What is't to leave betimes?* In the late editions neither copy has been followed. MALONE.

The old quartos read—Since no man, of ought he leaves, *knows*, what is't to leave betimes? Let be. This is the true reading. Here the premises conclude right, and the argument drawn out at length is to this effect: "It is true, that, by death, we loose all the goods of life; yet seeing this loss is no otherwise an evil than as we are sensible of it, and since death removes all sense of it, what matters it how soon we lose them? Therefore come, what will, I am prepared." WARBURTON.

The reading of the quarto was right, but in some other copy the harshness of the transposition was softened, and the passage stood thus:—*Since no man knows aught of what he leaves.* For *knows* was printed in the later copies *has*, by a slight blunder in such typographers.

I do not think Dr. Warburton's interpretation of the passage the best that it will admit. The meaning may be this,—Since *no man knows aught of* the state of which *he leaves*, since he cannot judge what other years may produce, why should he be afraid of *leaving* life betimes? Why should he dread an early death, of which he cannot tell whether it is an exclusion of happiness, or an interception of calamity? I despise the superstition of augury and omens, which has no ground in reason or piety; my comfort is, that I cannot fall but by the direction of Providence.

Sir T. Hanmer has—Since no man *owes* aught, a conjecture not very reprehensible. Since *no man can call any possession certain*, what is it to leave? JOHNSON.

[3] Give me your pardon, sir:] I wish Hamlet had made some other defence; it is unsuitable to the character of a good or a brave man, to shelter himself in falsehood. JOHNSON.

But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.
This presence knows,
And you must needs have heard, how I am punish't
With sore distraction *. What I have done,
That might your nature, honour, and exception,
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never, Hamlet:
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
Who does it then? His madness: If't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
Sir [4], in this audience,
Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,
And hurt my brother †.

LAER. I am satisfied in nature [5],
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge: but in my terms of honour,
I stand aloof: and will no reconcilement,
Till by some elder masters, of known honour [6],

* Quarto, *With a sore distraction.* † First folio, *mother.*

[4] Sir, &c.] This line I have restored [with Mr. Rowe] from the folio. STEEVENS.

[5] I am satisfied in NATURE, &c.] This was a piece of satire on fantastical honour. Though *nature* is satisfied, yet he will ask advice of older men of the sword, whether *artificial honour* ought to be contented with Hamlet's submission.

There is a passage somewhat similar in The Maid's Tragedy:

"*Eved.* Will you forgive me then?

"*Mel.* Stay, I must *ask mine honour* first." STEEVENS.

[6] Till by some ELDER MASTERS, of known honour,] This is said in allusion to an English custom. I learn from an ancient MS. of which the reader will find a more particular account in a note

I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungor'd * : But till that time,
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely ;
And will this brother's wager frankly play.—
Give us the foils ; come on.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes ; in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i'the darkest night,
Stick firy off indeed [7].

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric.—Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager ?

Ham. Very well, my lord ;
Your grace hath laid the odds o'the weaker side [8].

* First folio, *ungorg'd*.

to The Merry Wives of Windsor, Act I. Sc. I. that in Queen Elizabeth's time there were "four *ancient masters* of defence," in the city of London. They appear to have been the referees in many affairs of honour, and exacted tribute from all inferior practitioners of the art of fencing, &c. STEEVENS.

Our poet frequently alludes to English customs, and may have done so here, but I do not believe that gentlemen ever submitted points of honour to persons who exhibited themselves for money as prize-fighters on the publick stage ; though they might appeal in certain cases to Raleigh, Essex, or Southampton, who from their high rank, their course of life, and established reputation, might with strict propriety be styled, "elder masters, *of known honour*." MALONE.

[7] — like A STAR I'THE DARKEST NIGHT,
Stick firy off indeed.] So, in Chapman's version of the 22d Iliad :

" —— a world of *stars*, &c.—
" —— the *midnight that renders them most showne*,
" Then being their *foil*—." STEEVENS.

[8] Your grace hath laid THE ODDS o'er the weaker side.] When

King. I do not fear it: I have seen you both:—
But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds [9].

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well: These foils have all a length? [*They prepare to play.*

Osr. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoops of wine [1] upon that table:—
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;

the odds were on the side of Laertes, who was to hit Hamlet twelve times to nine, it was perhaps the author's slip. Sir T. Hanmer reads—

"Your grace hath laid upon the weaker side." Johnson.

I see no reason for altering this passage. Hamlet considers the things *imponed* by the King, as of more value than those *imponed* by Laertes; and therefore says, "that he had laid the odds on the weaker side." M. Mason.

Hamlet either means, that what the King had laid was more valuable than what Laertes staked; or that 'the king hath made his bet, an advantage being given to the weaker party.' I believe the first is the true interpretation. In the next line but one the word *odds* certainly means *an advantage given to the party*, but here it may have a different sense. This is not an uncommon practice with our poet. Malone.

The King had wagered, on Hamlet, *six Barbary horses*, against a few *rapiers*, *poniards*, &c. that is, about *twenty* to one. These are the *odds* here meant. Ritson.

9 But since he's better'd, we have therefore odds.] These *odds* were *twelve* to *nine* in favour of Hamlet, by Laertes giving him *three*. Ritson.

1 —the stoops of wine—] A *stoop* is a kind of *flagon*. See Twelfth Night, Act II. Sc. III. Steevens.

Containing somewhat about two gallons. Malone.

Stoup is a common word in Scotland at this day, and denotes a pewter vessel, resembling our wine measure; but of no determinate quantity, *that* being ascertained by an adjunct, as *gallon-stoup*, *pint-stoup*, *mutchkin-stoup*, &c. The vessel in which they fetch or keep water is also called the *water-stoup*. A *stoup of wine* is therefore equivalent to a pitcher of wine. Ritson.

And in the cup an union shall he throw [2],
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn; Give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to earth,

[2] And in the cup an UNION shall he throw,] In some editions:
"And in the cup an *onyx* shall he throw."
This is a various reading in several of the old copies; but *union* seems to me to be the true word. If I am not mistaken, neither the *onyx*, nor *sardonyx*, are jewels which ever found place in an imperial crown. An *union* is the finest sort of pearl, and has its place in all crowns, and coronets. Besides, let us consider what the King says on Hamlet's giving Laertes the first hit:
"Stay, give me drink. Hamlet, this *pearl* is thine;
"Here's to thy health."
Therefore, if an *union* be a *pearl*, and an *onyx* a gem, or stone, quite differing in its nature from *pearls*; the King saying, that Hamlet has earned the *pearl*, I think, amounts to a demonstration that it was an *union* pearl, which he meant to throw into the cup. THEOBALD.

"And in the cup an *union* shall he throw." Thus the folio rightly. In the first quarto, by the carelessness of the printer, for *union*, we have *unice*, which in the subsequent quarto copies was made *onyx*. An *union* is a very precious pearl. See Bullokar's English Expositor, 1616, and Florio's Italian Dictionary, 1598, in v. MALONE.

So, in Soliman and Perseda:
"Ay, were it Cleopatra's *union*."
The *union* is thus mentioned in P. Holland's translation of Pliny's Natural History: "And hereupon it is that our dainties and delicates here at Rome, &c. call them *unions*, as a man would say singular and by themselves alone."

To swallow a *pearl* in a draught seems to have been equally common to royal and mercantile prodigality. So, in the Second Part of If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody, 1606, Sir Thomas Gresham says:
"Here 16,000 pound at one clap goes.
"Instead of sugar, Gresham *drinks this pearle*
"Unto his queen and mistress."
It may be observed, however, that *pearls* were supposed to possess an exhilarating quality. Thus, Rondelet, lib. i. de Testac. c. xv.: "*Uniones* quæ à conchis, &c. valde *cordiales* sunt."
STEEVENS.

Now the king drinks to Hamlet.—Come, begin;—
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.
Ham. Come on, sir.
Laer. Come, my lord. [*They play.*
Ham. One.
Laer. No.
Ham. Judgment.
Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.
Laer. Well,—again.
King. Stay, give me drink: Hamlet, this pearl is thine [3];
Here's to thy health.—Give him the cup.
[*Trumpets sound; and Cannon shot off within.*
Ham. I'll play this bout first, set it by awhile.
Come.—Another hit; What say you? [*They play.*
Laer. A touch, a touch *, I do confess.
King. Our son shall win.
Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath [4].—

* Quarto omits *a touch, a touch.*

3 — this PEARL is thine;] Under pretence of throwing a *pearl* into the cup, the King may be supposed to drop some poisonous drug into the wine. Hamlet seems to suspect this, when he afterwards discovers the effects of the poison, and tauntingly asks him,—"Is the union here?" STEEVENS.

4 *Queen.* He's FAT, and scant of breath.] It seems that John Lowin, who was the original Falstaff, was no less celebrated for his performance of Henry VIII. and Hamlet. See the Historia Histrionica, &c. If he was adapted, by the corpulence of his figure, to appear with propriety in the two former of these characters, Shakspeare might have put this observation into the mouth of her majesty, to apologize for the want of such elegance of person as an audience might expect to meet with in the representative of the youthful prince of Denmark, whom Ophelia speaks of as "the glass of fashion and the mould of form." This, however, is mere conjecture, as Joseph Taylor likewise acted Hamlet during the life of Shakspeare.

In Ratsie's Ghost, (Gamaliel) no date, about 1605, bl. l. 4°. the second part of his madde prankes, &c.—He robs a company of players. "Sirra, saies he to the chiefest of them, thou hast a good presence on a stage—get thee to London, for if one man

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows *:
The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet [5].

HAM. Good madam,——

KING. Gertrude, do not drink.

QUEEN. I will, my lord;—I pray you, pardon me.

KING. It is the poison'd cup; it is too late.

[*Aside.*

HAM. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

QUEEN. Come, let me wipe thy face [6].

LAER. My lord, I'll hit him now.

KING. I do not think it.

LAER. And yet it is almost against my conscience.

[*Aside.*

HAM. Come, for the third, Laertes: You do † but dally;
I pray you, pass with your best violence;

* First folio, *Here's a napkin, rub thy brows.*
† First folio omits *do.*

were dead, [Lowin, perhaps,] there would be none fitter than thyself to play his parts—I durst venture all the money in my purse on thy head to play Hamlet with him for a wager." He knights him afterwards, and bids him—"Rise up, Sir Simon *two shares & a halfe*." I owe this quotation to one of Dr. Farmer's *memoranda*. STEEVENS.

The author of Historia Histrionica, and Downes the prompter, concur in saying, that Taylor was the performer of Hamlet. Roberts the player alone has asserted, (apparently without any authority,) that this part was performed by Lowin.

But in truth I am convinced that it was neither Taylor nor Lowin, but probably Burbage. Taylor apparently was not of the company till late, perhaps after 1615, and Lowin not till after 1603. MALONE.

[5] The queen CAROUSES TO THY FORTUNE, Hamlet,] i. e. (in humbler language) drinks good luck to you. A similar phrase occurs in David and Bethsabe, 1599:

"With full *carouses to his fortune* past." STEEVENS.

[6] Come, let me wipe thy face.] These very words (the present repetition of which might have been spared) are addressed by Doll Tearsheet to Falstaff, when he was heated by his pursuit of Pistol. See Henry IV. Act II. Sc. IV. STEEVENS.

+

In Lowin's Portraiture of him in the Academy the author is the worst-dressed actor of the 5.

I am afeard, you make a wanton of me [7].

LAER. Say you so? come on. [*They play.*

OSR. Nothing neither way.

LAER. Have at you now.

[*LAERTES wounds HAMLET; then in scuffling, they change Rapiers, and HAMLET wounds LAERTES* [8].

KING. Part them, they are incens'd.

HAM. Nay, come again. [*The Queen falls.*

OSR. Look to the queen there, ho!

HOR. They bleed on both sides:—How is it, my lord?

OSR. How is't, Laertes?

LAER. Why, as a woodcock to mine own * springe, Osric;
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

HAM. How does the queen?

* First folio omits *own*.

[7] —you make a WANTON of me.] A *wanton* was a man feeble and effeminate. In Cymbeline, Imogen says, I am not—

" ——— so citizen a *wanton*, as
" To seem to die, ere sick." JOHNSON.

Rather, you trifle with me as if you were playing with a child. So, in Romeo and Juliet:

" ——— I would have thee gone,
" And yet no further than a *wanton's* bird,
" That lets it hop a little from her hand,
" And with a silk thread pulls it back again." RITSON.

A passage in King John shows that *wanton* here means *a man feeble and effeminate*, as Dr. Johnson has explained it:

" ——— Shall a beardless *boy*,
" A cocker'd silken *wanton*, brave our fields,
" And flesh his spirit in a warlike soil," &c. MALONE.

The following passage in the first scene of Lee's Alexander the Great may furnish a sufficient comment on the words of Hamlet:

" He *dallied* with my point, and when I thrust,
" He frown'd and smil'd, and foil'd me like a fencer."

STEEVENS.

[8] —*wounds Laertes.*] This stage direction is omitted in the quarto. BOSWELL.

King. She swoons to see them bleed.
Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet!—
The drink, the drink;—I am poison'd! [*Dies.*
Ham. O villainy!—Ho*! let the door be lock'd:
Treachery! seek it out. [*Laertes falls.*
Laer. It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain;
No medicine in the world can do thee good,
In thee there is not half an hour's life†;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated, and envenom'd: the foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me; lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again: Thy mother's poison'd;
I can no more; the king, the king's to blame.
Ham. The point
Envenom'd too!—Then, venom, to thy work.
[*Stabs the King.*
Osr. & Lords. Treason! treason!
King. O, yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt.
Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion:—Is the‡ union here[8]?
Follow my mother. [*King dies.*
Laer. He is justly serv'd;
It is a poison temper'd by himself.—

* Quarto, *How.* † First folio, *half an hour of life.*
‡ First folio, *thy.*

[8] —Is the UNION here?] In this place likewise the quarto reads, an *onyx*. STEEVENS.

So that it is likely Shakspeare first wrote *onyx*, and afterwards finding the error altered it to *union*. JENNENS.

"—is the *union* here?" Thus the folio. In a former passage in the quarto 1604, for *union* we had *unice;* here it has *onyx*.

It should seem from this line, and Laertes's next speech, that Hamlet here forces the expiring King to drink some of the poisoned cup, and that he dies while it is at his lips. MALONE.

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee;
Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*

HAM. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I am dead, Horatio:—Wretched queen, adieu!—
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act [9],
Had I but time, (as this fell sergeant, death,
Is strict in his arrest [1],) O, I could tell you,—
But let it be:—Horatio, I am dead;
Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright*
To the unsatisfied.

HOR. Never believe it;
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane,
Here's yet some liquor left.

HAM. As thou'rt a man,—
Give me the cup; let go; by heaven I'll have it.—
O God!—Horatio [2], what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me [3]?
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,

† First folio, *my causes right.*

9 That are but mutes or audience to this act,] That are either *auditors* of this *catastrophe*, or at most only *mute performers*, that fill the stage without any part in the action. JOHNSON.

1 — (as this FELL SERGEANT, death,
Is strict in his ARREST,)] So, in our poet's 74th Sonnet:

"——— when that *fell arrest*,
"*Without all bail*, shall carry me away."

So, in Silvester's Dubartas:

"And *death*, *serjeant* of the eternal Judge,
"Comes very late to his sole seated lodge." MALONE.

A *serjeant* is a bailiff, or sheriff's officer. RITSON.

2 O GOD!—Horatio, &c.] Thus the quarto 1604. Folio: "O *good* Horatio." MALONE.

3 — shall LIVE behind me?] Thus the folio. The quartos read—shall *I leave* behind me. STEEVENS.

Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story.—
[*March afar off, and Shot within.*
What warlike noise is this?

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

Ham. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit [4];

[4] The potent poison quite o'ER-CROWS my spirit;] Thus the first quarto, and the first folio. Alluding, I suppose, to a victorious cock exulting over his conquered antagonist. The same word occurs in Lingua, &c. 1607:

"Shall I? th' embassadress of gods and men,
"That pull'd proud Phœbe from her brightsome sphere,
"And dark'd Apollo's countenance with a word,
"Be *over-crow'd*, and breathe without revenge?"

Again, in Hall's Satires, Lib. V. Sat. II.:

"Like the vain bubble of Iberian pride,
"That *over-croweth* all the world beside."

This phrase often occurs in the controversial pieces of Gabriel Harvey, 1593, &c. It is also found in Chapman's translation of the twenty-first book of Homer's Odyssey:

"——— and told his foe
"It was not fair, nor equal, t' *overcrow*
"The poorest guest—." STEEVENS.

This word [*o'er-crows*], for which Mr. Pope and succeeding editors have substituted *over-grows*, is used by Holinshed in his History of Ireland: "These noblemen laboured with tooth and nayle to *over-crow*, and consequently to overthrow, one another."

Again, in the epistle prefixed to Nashe's Apologie of Pierce Pennilesse, 1593: "About two yeeres since a certayne demi-divine took upon him to set his foote to mine, and *over-crowe* me with comparative terms."

I find the reading which Mr. Pope and the subsequent editors adopted (*o'er-grows*,) was taken from a late quarto of no authority, printed in 1637. MALONE.

The accepted reading is the more quaint, the rejected one the more elegant of the two; at least Mr. Rowe has given the latter to his dying Amestris in The Ambitious Stepmother:

"The gloom *grows o'er* me." STEEVENS.

I cannot live to hear the news from England:
But I do prophecy the election lights
On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents [5], more and less,
Which have solicited [6].—The rest is silence *.
[*Dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart;—Good night, sweet prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest [7]!
Why does the drum come hither? [*March within.*

* First folio, *silence, O! O! O!*

[5] —the OCCURRENTS,] i. e. incidents. The word is now disused. So, in The Hog Hath Lost His Pearl, 1614:

"Such strange *occurrents* of my fore-past life."

Again, in The Barons' Wars, by Drayton, Canto I.:

"With each *occurrent*, right in his degree."

Again, in Chapman's version of the twenty-fourth Iliad:

"Of good *occurrents* and none ill am I ambassadresse."

STEEVENS.

[6] Which have SOLICITED.] *Solicited*, for 'brought on the event.'

WARBURTON.

Warburton says, that *solicited* means *brought on the event;* but that is a meaning the word cannot import. That have *solicited*, means that have *excited;* but the sentence is left imperfect.

M. MASON.

What Hamlet would have said, the poet has not given us any ground for conjecturing The words seem to mean no more than —*which have incited me to* —. MALONE.

[7] Now cracks a noble heart;—Good night, sweet prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!] So, in Pericles, Prince of Tyre, 1609;

"If thou liv'st, Pericles, thou hast a *heart*,
"That even *cracks* for woe."

The concluding words of the unfortunate Lord Essex's prayer on the scaffold were these: "—and when my life and body shall part, send *thy blessed angels, which may receive my soule, and convey it to the joys of heaven.*"

Hamlet had certainly been exhibited before the execution of that amiable nobleman; but the words here given to Horatio might have been one of the many additions made to this play. As no copy of an earlier date than 1604 has yet been discovered, whether Lord Essex's last words were in our author's thoughts, cannot be now ascertained. MALONE.

Enter FORTINBRAS, *the English Ambassadors, and Others.*

FORT. Where is this sight?
HOR. What is it, you would see?
If aught of woe, or wonder, cease your search.
FORT. This quarry cries on havock [8]!—O proud death!
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell [9],
That thou so many princes, at a shot,
So bloodily hast struck?
1 *AMB.* The sight is dismal;
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless, that should give us hearing,
To tell him, his commandment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead:
Where should we have our thanks?
HOR. Not from his mouth [1],
Had it the ability of life to thank you;

"And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!" Rather from Marston's Insatiate Countess, 1603:

"An host of angels be thy convey hence!" STEEVENS.

As Hamlet, according to my conjecture, was written in 1600, Shakspeare could not have copied from the Insatiate Countess in 1603. MALONE.

[8] This quarry CRIES ON havock!] Sir T. Hanmer reads:

"——— cries *out*, havock!"

To *cry on*, was to *exclaim against*. I suppose, when unfair sportsmen destroyed more *quarry* or *game* than was reasonable, the censure was to cry, *Havock*. JOHNSON.

We have the same phraseology in Othello, Act V. Sc. I.:

"—— Whose noise is this, that *cries on* murder?"

See the note there. MALONE.

[9] What FEAST is toward in thine eternal cell,] Shakspeare has already employed this allusion to the *Choæ*, or *feasts of the dead*, which were anciently celebrated at Athens, and are mentioned by Plutarch in The Life of Antonius. Our author likewise makes Talbot say to his son in The First Part of King Henry VI.:

"Now art thou come unto a *feast of death*." STEEVENS.

[1] — his mouth,] i. e. the king's. STEEVENS.

He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd; give order, that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view [2];
And let me speak, to the yet unknowing world,
How these things come about: So shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts [3];
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters;
Of deaths put on [4] by cunning, and forc'd cause [5];

[2] — give order, that these BODIES
High on a STAGE be placed to the view;] This idea was apparently taken from Arthur Brooke's Tragicall Hystory of Romeus and Juliet, 1562:

"The prince did straight ordaine, the *corses* that wer founde,
"Should be set forth *upon a stage hye raysed* from the grounde," &c. STEEVENS.

[3] Of CARNAL, bloody, and unnatural acts;] *Carnal* is a word used by Shakspeare as an adjective to *carnage*. RITSON.

Of sanguinary and unnatural acts, to which the perpetrator was instigated by concupiscence, or, to use our poet's own words, by "*carnal* stings." The speaker alludes to the murder of old Hamlet by his brother, previous to his incestuous union with Gertrude. A *Remarker* asks, "was the relationship between the usurper and the deceased king a secret confined to Horatio?"—No, but the *murder* of Hamlet by Claudius was a secret which the young prince had imparted to Horatio, and had imparted to him alone; and to this it is he principally, though covertly, alludes.—*Carnal* is the reading of the only authentick copies, the quarto 1604, and the folio 1623. The modern editors, following a quarto of no authority, for *carnal*, read *cruel*. MALONE.

The edition immediately preceding that of Mr. Malone, reads—*carnal*, and not *cruel*, as here asserted. REED.

To this and similar observations I can only repeat what I have said in The Two Gentlemen of Verona, that the edition here alluded to had not been published when I formerly began the revision of these plays. MALONE.

[4] Of deaths PUT ON —] i. e. instigated, produced. See Coriolanus, Act II. Sc. III. MALONE.

[5] — and FORC'D cause;] Thus the folio. The quartos read—and *for no* cause. STEEVENS.

And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I
Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune;
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom[6],
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more[7]:
But let this same be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mischance,
On plots, and errors, happen.

Fort. Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royally: and, for his passage,
The soldiers' musick, and the rites of war *,
Speak loudly for him.—
Take up the bodies †:—Such a sight as this

* Quarto, *right of war.* † First folio, *body.*

[6] — some rights OF MEMORY in this kingdom,] Some rights, which are remembered in this kingdom. MALONE.

[7] And from his mouth whose voice will draw ON more:] *No* is the reading of the old quartos, but certainly a mistaken one. We say, *a man will no more draw breath;* but that a man's *voice will draw no more,* is, I believe, an expression without any authority. I choose to espouse the reading of the elder folio:

"And from his mouth whose voice will draw *on* more.

And this is the poet's reading. Hamlet, just before his death, had said:

"But I do prophecy, the election lights
"On Fortinbras: he has my dying *voice;*
"So tell *him,*" &c.

Accordingly, Horatio here delivers that message; and very justly infers, that Hamlet's *voice* will be seconded by others, and procure them in favour of Fortinbras's succession. THEOBALD.

Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot. [*A dead March.*

[*Exeunt, bearing off the dead Bodies; after which, a Peal of Ordnance is shot off*[8].

[8] If the dramas of Shakspeare were to be characterised, each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow to the tragedy of Hamlet the praise of variety. The incidents are so numerous, that the argument of the play would make a long tale. The scenes are interchangeably diversified with merriment and solemnity: with merriment that includes judicious and instructive observations; and solemnity not strained by poetical violence above the natural sentiments of man. New characters appear from time to time in continual succession, exhibiting various forms of life and particular modes of conversation. The pretended madness of Hamlet causes much mirth, the mournful distraction of Ophelia fills the heart with tenderness, and every personage produces the effect intended, from the apparition that in the first Act chills the blood with horror, to the fop in the last, that exposes affectation to just contempt.

The conduct is perhaps not wholly secure against objections. The action is indeed for the most part in continual progression, but there are some scenes which neither forward nor retard it. Of the feigned madness of Hamlet there appears no adequate cause, for he does nothing which he might not have done with the reputation of sanity. He plays the madman most, when he treats Ophelia with so much rudeness, which seems to be useless and wanton cruelty.

Hamlet is, through the whole piece, rather an instrument than an agent. After he has, by the stratagem of the play, convicted the King, he makes no attempt to punish him; and his death is at last effected by an incident which Hamlet had no part in producing.

The catastrophe is not very happily produced; the exchange of weapons is rather an expedient of necessity, than a stroke of art. A scheme might easily be formed to kill Hamlet with the dagger, and Laertes with the bowl.

The poet is accused of having shown little regard to poetical justice, and may be charged with equal neglect of poetical probability. The apparition left the regions of the dead to little purpose; the revenge which he demands is not obtained, but by the death of him that was required to take it; and the gratification which would arise from the destruction of an usurper and a murderer, is abated by the untimely death of Ophelia, the young, the beautiful, the harmless, and the pious. JOHNSON.

The levity of behaviour which Hamlet assumes immediately

after the disappearance of the Ghost in the first Act, [Sc. V.] has been objected to; but the writer of some sensible remarks on this tragedy, published in 1736, justly observes, that the poet's object there was, that Marcellus "might not imagine that the Ghost had revealed to Hamlet some matter of great consequence to him, and that he might not therefore be suspected of any deep design."

"I have heard (adds the same writer) many persons wonder, why the poet should bring in this Ghost in complete armour.—I think these reasons may be given for it. We are to consider, that he could introduce him in these dresses only; in his regal dress, in a habit of interment, in a common habit, or in some fantastick one of his own invention. Now let us examine, which was most likely to affect the spectators with passions proper on the occasion.

"The regal habit has nothing uncommon in it, nor surprising, nor could it give rise to any fine images. The habit of interment was something too horrible; for terror, not horror, is to be raised in the spectators. The common habit (or *habit de ville*, as the French call it,) was by no means proper for the occasion. It remains then that the poet should choose some habit from his own brain: but this certainly could not be proper, because invention in such a case would be so much in danger of falling into the grotesque, that it was not to be hazarded.

"Now as to the armour, it was very suitable to a king who is described as a great warrior, and is very particular; and consequently affects the spectators without being fantastick.—

"The King spurs on his son to revenge his foul and unnatural murder, from these two considerations chiefly; that he was sent into the other world without having had time to repent of his sins, and without the necessary sacraments, according to the church of Rome, and that consequently his soul was to suffer, if not eternal damnation, at least a long course of penance in purgatory; which aggravates the circumstances of his brother's barbarity: and secondly, that Denmark might not be the scene of usurpation and incest, and the throne thus polluted and profaned. For these reasons he prompts the young prince to revenge; else it would have been more becoming the character of such a prince as Hamlet's father is represented to have been, and more suitable to his present condition, to have left his brother to the divine punishment, and to a possibility of repentance for his base crime, which, by cutting him off, he must be deprived of.

"To conform to the ground-work of his plot, Shakspeare makes the young prince feign himself mad. I cannot but think this to be injudicious; for so far from securing himself from any violence which he feared from the usurper, it seems to have been the most likely way of getting himself confined, and consequently debarred from an opportunity of revenging his father's death, which now seemed to be his only aim; and accordingly it was the occasion of his being sent away to England; which design, had it taken effect

upon his life, he never could have revenged his father's murder. To speak truth, our poet, by keeping too close to the ground-work of his plot, has fallen into an absurdity; for there appears no reason at all in nature, why the young prince did not put the usurper to death as soon as possible, especially as Hamlet is represented as a youth so brave, and so careless of his own life.

"The case indeed is this. Had Hamlet gone naturally to work, as we could suppose such a prince to do in parallel circumstances, there would have been an end of our play. The poet, therefore, was obliged to delay his hero's revenge: but then he should have contrived some good reason for it.

"His beginning his scenes of Hamlet's madness by his behaviour to Ophelia, was judicious, because by this means he might be thought to be mad for her, not that his brain was disturbed about state affairs, which would have been dangerous.

"It does not appear whether Ophelia's madness was chiefly for her father's death, or for the loss of Hamlet. It is not often that young women run mad for the loss of their fathers. It is more natural to suppose that, like Chimene, in the Cid, her great sorrow proceeded from her father's being killed by the man she loved, and thereby making it indecent for her ever to marry him.

"Laertes's character is a very odd one; it is not easy to say whether it is good or bad: but his consenting to the villainous contrivance of the usurper's to murder Hamlet, makes him much more a bad man than a good one.—It is a very nice conduct in the poet to make the usurper build his scheme upon the generous unsuspicious temper of the person he intends to murder, and thus to raise the prince's character by the confession of his enemy; to make the villain ten times more odious from his own mouth. The contrivance of the foil unbated, (i. e. without a button,) is methinks too gross a deceit to go down even with a man of the most unsuspicious nature.

"Laertes's death and the Queen's are truly poetical justice, and very naturally brought about, although I do not conceive it so easy to change rapiers in a scuffle without knowing it at the time. The death of the Queen is particularly according to the strictest rules of poetical justice; for she loses her life by the villainy of the very person who had been the cause of all her crimes.

"Since the poet deferred so long the usurper's death, we must own that he has very naturally effected it, and still added fresh crimes to those the murderer had already committed.

"Upon Laertes's repentance for contriving the death of Hamlet, one cannot but feel some sentiments of pity for him; but who can see or read the death of the young prince without melting into tears and compassion? Horatio's earnest desire to die with the prince, thus not to survive his friend, gives a stronger idea of his friendship for Hamlet in the few lines on that occasion,

than many actions or expressions could possibly have done. And Hamlet's begging him *to draw his breath in this harsh world* a little longer, to clear his reputation, and manifest his innocence, is very suitable to his virtuous character, and the honest regard that all men should have not to be misrepresented to posterity; that they may not set a bad example, when in reality they have set a good one: which is the only motive that can, in reason, recommend the love of fame and glory.

"Horatio's desire of having the bodies carried to a stage, &c. is very well imagined, and was the best way of satisfying the request of his deceased friend: and he acts in this, and in all points, suitably to the manly honest character, under which he is drawn throughout the piece. Besides, it gives a sort of content to the audience, that though their favourite (which must be Hamlet) did not escape with life, yet the greatest amends will be made him, which can be in this world, viz. justice done to his memory.

"Fortinbras comes in very naturally at the close of the play, and lays a very just claim to the throne of Denmark, as he had the dying voice of the prince. He in a few words gives a noble character of Hamlet, and serves to carry off the deceased hero from the stage with the honours due to his birth and merit."

Act II. Scene II. P. 304. *The rugged Pyrrhus, he,* &c.] The two greatest poets of this and the last age, Mr. Dryden, in the preface to Troilus and Cressida, and Mr. Pope, in his note on this place, have concurred in thinking, that Shakspeare produced this long passage with design to ridicule and expose the bombast of the play from whence it was taken; and that Hamlet's commendation of it is purely ironical. This is become the general opinion. I think just otherwise; and that it was given with commendation to upbraid the false taste of the audience of that time, which would not suffer them to do justice to the simplicity and sublime of this production. And I reason, first, from the character Hamlet gives of the play, from whence the passage is taken. Secondly, from the passage itself. And thirdly, from the effect it had on the audience.

Let us consider the character Hamlet gives of it.' The play, I remember, pleased not the million; 'twas caviare to the general: but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgment in such matters cried in the top of mine) an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember one said, there was no salt in the lines to make the matter savoury; nor no matter in the phrase that might indite the author of affection; but called it an honest method.' They who suppose the passage given to be ridiculed, must needs suppose this character to be purely ironical. But if so, it is the

strongest irony that ever was written. *It pleased not the multitude.* This we must conclude to be true, however ironical the rest be. Now the reason given of the designed ridicule is the supposed bombast. But those were the very plays, which at that time we know took with the multitude. And Fletcher wrote a kind of *Rehearsal* purposely to expose them. But say it is bombast, and that therefore it took not with the multitude. Hamlet presently tells us what it was that displeased them. 'There was no salt in the lines to make the matter savoury; nor no matter in the phrase that might indite the author of affection; but called it an honest method.' Now whether a person speaks ironically or no, when he quotes others, yet common sense requires he should quote what they say. Now it could not be, if this play displeased because of the bombast, that those whom it displeased should give this reason for their dislike. The same inconsistencies and absurdities abound in every other part of Hamlet's speech, supposing it to be ironical; but take him as speaking his sentiments, the whole is of a piece; and to this purpose. The play, I remember, pleased not the multitude, and the reason was, its being wrote on the rules of the ancient drama; to which they were entire strangers. But, in my opinion, and in the opinion of those for whose judgment I have the highest esteem, it was an excellent play, *well digested in the scenes*, i. e. where the three unities were well preserved. 'Set down with as much modesty as cunning,' i. e. where not only the art of composition, but the simplicity of nature, was carefully attended to. The characters were a faithful picture of life and manners, in which nothing was overcharged into farce. But these qualities, which gained my esteem, lost the publick's. For 'I remember, one said, There was no salt in the lines to make the matter savoury,' i. e. there was not, according to the mode of that time, a fool or clown, to joke, quibble, and talk freely. 'Nor no matter in the phrase that might indite the author of affection,' i. e. nor none of those passionate, pathetick love scenes, so essential to modern tragedy. 'But he called it an honest method,' i. e. he owned, however *tasteless* this method of writing, on the ancient plan, was to our times, yet it was chaste and pure; the distinguishing character of the Greek drama. I need only make one observation on all this; that, thus interpreted, it is the justest picture of a good tragedy, wrote on the ancient rules. And that I have rightly interpreted it, appears farther from what we find in the old quarto,—'An honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more *handsome* than *fine*,' i. e. it had a natural beauty, but none of the fucus of false art.

2. A second proof that this speech was given to be admired, is from the intrinsick merit of the speech itself; which contains the description of a circumstance very happily imagined, namely, Ilium and Priam's falling together, with the effect it had on the destroyer.

" —— The hellish Pyrrhus, &c.

To,—

" Repugnant to command.
" The unnerved father falls, &c.

To,—

" —— So after Pyrrhus' pause."

Now this circumstance, illustrated with the fine similitude of the storm, is so highly worked up, as to have well deserved a place in Virgil's second book of the Æneid, even though the work had been carried on to that perfection which the Roman poet had conceived.

3. The third proof is, from the effects which followed on the recital. Hamlet, his best character, approves it; the player is deeply affected in repeating it; and only the foolish Polonius tired with it. We have said enough before of Hamlet's sentiments. As for the player, he changes colour, and the tears start from his eyes. But our author was too good a judge of nature to make bombast and unnatural sentiment produce such an effect. Nature and Horace both instructed him:

Si vis me flere, dolendum est
Primùm ipsi tibi, tunc tua me infortunia lædent,
Telephe, vel Peleu. *Male si mandata loqueris,*
Aut dormitabo aut ridebo.,

And it may be worth observing, that Horace gives this precept particularly to show, that bombast and unnatural sentiments are incapable of moving the tender passions, which he is directing the poet how to raise. For, in the lines just before, he gives this rule:

Telephus et Peleus, cùm pauper et exul uterque,
Projicit ampullas, et sesquipedalia verba.

Not that I would deny, that very bad lines in bad tragedies have had this effect. But then it always proceeds from one or other of these causes:

1. Either when the subject is domestick, and the scene lies at home; the spectators, in this case, become interested in the fortunes of the distressed; and their thoughts are so much taken up with the subject, that they are not at liberty to attend to the poet; who otherwise, by his faulty sentiments and diction, would have stifled the emotions springing up from a sense of the distress. But this is nothing to the case in hand. For, as Hamlet says:

" What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?"

2. When bad lines raise this affection, they are bad in the other extreme: low, abject, and groveling, instead of being highly figurative and swelling; yet, when attended with a natural simplicity, they have force enough to strike illiterate and simple minds. The tragedies of Banks will justify both these observation.

But if any one will still say, that Shakspeare intended to represent a player unnaturally and fantastically affected, we must appeal to Hamlet, that is, to Shakspeare himself, in this matter; who, on the reflection he makes upon the player's emotion, in order to excite his own revenge, gives not the least hint that the player was unnaturally or injudiciously moved. On the contrary, his fine description of the actor's emotion shows, he thought just otherwise:

" ——— this player here,
" But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
" Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
" That from her working all his visage wan'd:
" Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,
" A broken voice," &c.

And indeed had Hamlet esteemed this emotion any thing unnatural, it had been a very improper circumstance to spur him to his purpose.

As Shakspeare has here shown the effects which a fine description of nature, heightened with all the ornaments of art, had upon an intelligent player, whose business habituates him to enter intimately and deeply into the characters of men and manners, and to give nature its free workings on all occasions; so he has artfully shown what effects the very same scene would have upon a quite different man, Polonius; *by nature*, very weak and very artificial [two qualities, though commonly enough joined in life, yet generally so much disguised as not to be seen by common eyes to be together; and which an ordinary poet durst not have brought so near one another]; *by discipline*, practised in a species of wit and eloquence, which was stiff, forced, and pedantick; and *by trade* a politician, and, therefore, of consequence, without any of the affecting notices of humanity. Such is the man whom Shakspeare has judiciously chosen to represent the false taste of that audience which has condemned the play here reciting. When the actor comes to the finest and most pathetick part of the speech, Polonius cries out, *This is too long;* on which Hamlet, in contempt of his ill judgment, replies, *It shall to the barber's with thy beard;* [intimating that, by this judgment, it appeared that all his wisdom lay in his length of beard]. *Pr'ythee, say on. He's for a jig or a tale of bawdry,* [the common entertainment of that time, as well as this, of the people] *or he sleeps; say on.* And yet this man of modern taste, who stood all this time perfectly unmoved with the forcible imagery of the relator, no sooner hears, amongst many good things, one quaint and fantastical word, put in, I suppose, purposely for this end, than he professes his approbation of the propriety and dignity of it. *That's good. Mobled queen is good.* On the whole then, I think, it plainly appears, that the long quotation is not given to be ridiculed and laughed at, but to be admired. The

character given of the play, by Hamlet, cannot be ironical. The passage itself is extremely beautiful. It has the effect that all pathetick relations, naturally written, should have; and it is condemned, or regarded with indifference, by one of a wrong, unnatural taste. From hence (to observe it by the way) the actors, in their representation of this play, may learn how this speech ought to be spoken, and what appearance Hamlet ought to assume during the recital.

That which supports the common opinion, concerning this passage, is the turgid expression in some parts of it; which, they think, could never be given by the poet to be commended. We shall, therefore, in the next place, examine the lines most obnoxious to censure, and see how much, allowing the charge, this will make for the induction of their conclusion:

" Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide,
" But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
" The unnerved father falls."

And again,—

" Out, out, thou strumpet fortune! All you gods,
" In general synod, take away her power:
" Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
" And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
" As low as to the fiends."

Now whether these be bombast or not, is not the question; but whether Shakspeare esteemed them so. That he did not so esteem them appears from his having used the very same thoughts in the same expressions, in his best plays, and given them to his principal characters, where he aims at the sublime. As in the following passages:

Troilus, in Troilus and Cressida, far outstrains the execution of Pyrrhus's sword in the character he gives of Hector's:

" When many times the *caitive* Grecians *fall*
" *Even in the fan and wind of your fair sword,*
" You bid them rise and live."

Cleopatra, in Antony and Cleopatra, rails at fortune in the same manner:

" No, let me speak, and let me rail so high,
" *That the false huswife Fortune break her wheel,*
" Provok'd at my offence."

But another use may be made of these quotations; a discovery of the author of this recited play: which, letting us into a circumstance of our author's life (as a writer) hitherto unknown, was the reason I have been so large upon this question. I think then it appears, from what has been said, that the play in dispute was Shakspeare's own; and that this was the occasion of writing it. He was desirous, as soon as he had found his strength, of restoring the chasteness and regularity of the ancient stage: and therefore

composed this tragedy on the model of the Greek drama, as may be seen by throwing so much *action* into *relation*. But his attempt proved fruitless; and the raw, unnatural taste, then prevalent, forced him back again into his old Gothick manner. For which he took this revenge upon his audience. WARBURTON.

I formerly thought that the lines which have given rise to the foregoing observations, were extracted from some old play, of which it appeared to me probable that Christopher Marlowe was the author; but whatever Shakspeare's view in producing them may have been, I am now decidedly of opinion they were written by himself, not in any former unsuccessful piece, but expressly for the play of Hamlet. It is observable, that what Dr. Warburton calls "the fine similitude of the storm," is likewise found in our poet's Venus and Adonis. MALONE.

The praise which Hamlet bestows on this piece is certainly dissembled, and agrees very well with the character of madness, which, before witnesses, he thought it necessary to support. The speeches before us have so little merit, that nothing but an affectation of singularity could have influenced Dr. Warburton to undertake their defence. The poet, perhaps, meant to exhibit a just resemblance of some of the plays of his own age, in which the faults were too general and too glaring to permit a few splendid passages to atone for them. The player knew his trade, and spoke the lines in an affecting manner, because Hamlet had declared them to be pathetick, or might be in reality a little moved by them; for, "There are less degrees of nature (says Dryden) by which some faint emotions of pity and terror are raised in us, as a less engine will raise a less proportion of weight, though not so much as one of Archimedes' making." The mind of the prince, it must be confessed, was fitted for the reception of gloomy ideas, and his tears were ready at a slight solicitation. It is by no means proved, that Shakspeare has *employed the same thoughts clothed in the same expressions, in his best plays*. If he bids *the false huswife Fortune break her wheel*, he does not desire her to *break all its spokes;* nay, *even its periphery, and make use of the nave afterwards for such an immeasurable cast*. Though if what Dr. Warburton has said should be found in any instance to be exactly true, what can we infer from thence, but that Shakspeare was sometimes wrong in spite of conviction, and in the hurry of writing committed those very faults which his judgment could detect in others? Dr. Warburton is inconsistent in his assertions concerning the literature of Shakspeare. In a note on Troilus and Cressida, he affirms, that his want of learning kept him from being acquainted with the writings of Homer; and, in this instance, would suppose him capable of producing a complete tragedy *written on the ancient rules;* and that the speech before us had sufficient merit to entitle it to a place in the second book

of Virgil's Æneid, even though the work had been carried to that perfection which the Roman poet had conceived *.

Had Shakspeare made one unsuccessful attempt in the manner of the ancients (that he had any knowledge of their rules, remains to be proved,) it would certainly have been recorded by contemporary writers, among whom Ben Jonson would have been the first. Had his darling ancients been unskilfully imitated by a rival poet, he would at least have preserved the memory of the fact, to show how unsafe it was for any one, who was not as thorough a scholar as himself, to have meddled with their sacred remains.

"Within that circle none durst walk but he." He has represented Inigo Jones as being ignorant of the very names of those classick authors, whose architecture he undertook to correct; in his Poetaster he has in several places hinted at our poet's injudicious use of words, and seems to have pointed his ridicule more than once at some of his descriptions and characters. It is true, that he has praised him, but it was not while that praise could have been of any service to him; and posthumous applause is always to be had on easy conditions. Happy it was for Shakspeare, that he took nature for his guide, and, engaged in the warm pursuit of her beauties, left to Jonson the repositories of learning: so has he escaped a contest which might have rendered his life uneasy, and bequeathed to our possession the more valuable copies from nature herself: for Shakspeare was (says Dr. Hurd, in his notes on Horace's Art of Poetry,) "the first that broke through the bondage of classical superstition. And he owed this felicity, as he did some others, to his want of what is called the advantage of a learned education. Thus uninfluenced by the weight of early prepossession, he struck at once into the road of nature and common sense: and without designing, without knowing it, hath left us in his historical plays, with all their anomalies, an exacter resemblance of the Athenian stage than is any where to be found in its most professed admirers and copyists."

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* It appears to me not only that Shakspeare had the favourable opinion of these lines which he makes Hamlet express, but that they were extracted from some play which he, at a more early period, had either produced or projected upon the story of Dido and Æneas. The verses recited are far superior to those of any coeval writer: the parallel passage in Marlowe and Nashe's Dido will not bear the comparison. Possibly, indeed, it might have been his first attempt before *the divinity that lodged within him* had instructed him to despise the tumid and unnatural style so much and so unjustly admired in his predecessors or contemporaries, and which he afterward so happily ridiculed in "the swaggering vaine of Ancient Pistol." RITSON.

Again, ibid.: "It is possible there are, who think *a want of reading*, as well as vast snperiority of genius, hath contributed to lift this astonishing man, to the glory of being esteemed the most original THINKER and SPEAKER, since the times of Homer."

To this extract I may add the sentiments of Dr. Edward Young on the same occasion. "Who knows whether Shakspeare might not have thought less, if he had read more? Who knows if he might not have laboured under the load of Jonson's learning, as Enceladus under Etna? His mighty genius, indeed, through the most mountainous oppression, would have breathed out some of his inextinguishable fire: yet possibly, he might not have risen up into that giant, that much more than common man, at which we now gaze with amazement and delight. Perhaps he was as learned as his dramatick province required; for whatever other learning he wanted, he was master of two books, which the last conflagration alone can destroy; the book of nature, and that of man. These he had by heart, and has transcribed many admirable pages of them into his immortal works. These are the fountain-head, whence the Castalian streams of *original* composition flow; and these are often mudded by other waters, though waters in their distinct channel, most wholesome and pure; as two chemical liquors, separately clear as crystal, grow foul by mixture, and offend the sight. So that he had not only as much learning as his dramatick province required, but, perhaps, as it could safely bear. If Milton had spared some of his learning, his muse would have gained more glory than he would have lost by it." *Conjectures on Original Composition.*

The first remark of Voltaire on this tragedy, is that the former king had been poisoned by his brother and *his queen*. The guilt of the latter, however, is far from being ascertained. The Ghost forbears to accuse her as an accessary, and very forcibly recommends her to the mercy of her son. I may add, that her conscience appears undisturbed during the exhibition of the mock tragedy, which produces so visible a disorder in her husband who was really criminal. The last observation of the same author has no greater degree of veracity to boast of; for now, says he, all the actors in the piece are swept away, and one Monsieur Fortenbras is introduced to conclude it. Can this be true, when Horatio, Osric, Voltimand, and Cornelius survive? These, together with the whole court of Denmark, are supposed to be present at the catastrophe, so that we are not indebted to the Norwegian chief for having kept the stage from vacancy.

Monsieur de Voltaire has since transmitted, in an epistle to the Academy of Belles Lettres, some remarks on the late French translation of Shakspeare; but, alas! no traces of genius or vigour are discoverable in this *crambe repetita*, which is notorious only for its insipidity, fallacy, and malice. It serves indeed to show an apparent decline of talents and spirit in its writer, who no longer

relies on his own ability to depreciate a rival, but appeals in a plaintive strain to the queen and princesses of France for their assistance to stop the further circulation of Shakspeare's renown.

Impartiality, nevertheless, must acknowledge that his private correspondence displays a superior degree of animation. Perhaps an ague shook him when he appealed to the publick on this subject; but the effects of a fever seem to predominate in his subsequent letter to Monsieur D'Argenteuil on the same occasion; for such a letter it is as our John Dennis (while his phrenzy lasted) might be supposed to have written. "C'est moi qui autrefois parlai le premier de ce Shakspeare: c'est moi qui le premier montrai aux François quelques perles quels j'avois trouvé dans son enorme *fumier*." Mrs. Montague, the justly celebrated authoress of the Essay on the Genius and Writings of our author, was in Paris, and in the circle where these ravings of the Frenchman were first publickly recited. On hearing the illiberal expression already quoted, with no less elegance than readiness she replied —"C'est un *fumier* qui a fertilizé une terre bien ingrate."— In short, the author of Zayre, Mahomet, and Semiramis, possesses all the mischievous qualities of a midnight felon, who, in the hope to conceal his guilt, sets the house he has robbed on fire.

As for Messieurs D'Alembert and Marmontel, they might safely be passed over with that neglect which their impotence of criticism deserves. Voltaire, in spite of his natural disposition to vilify an English poet, by adopting sentiments, characters, and situations from Shakspeare, has bestowed on him involuntary praise. Happily, he has not been disgraced by the worthless encomiums or disfigured by the aukward imitations of the other pair, who "follow in the chace not like hounds that hunt, but like those who fill up the cry." When D'Alembert declares that more sterling sense is to be met with in ten French verses than in thirty English ones, contempt is all that he provokes—such contempt as can only be exceeded by that which every scholar will express, who may chance to look into the prose translation of Lucan by Marmontel, with the vain expectation of discovering either the sense, the spirit, or the whole of the original.

STEEVENS.

Without adopting the fanciful hypothesis with which Dr. Warburton's note concludes, I entirely agree with him in thinking that Shakspeare did not intend this speech as a specimen of ridiculous bombast. That some of the lines are written in a false taste, may be readily allowed; but were it not an ungracious task, it would not, I fear, be difficult to produce other passages in several of his plays which are liable to the same objection. Had he designed to write burlesque, he never would have introduced the simile beginning

"And as we often see before some storm," &c.

A distinguished foreign critick, worthy to be spoken of with all praise by the admirers of Shakspeare, has assigned a very inge-

nious reason for the inflated language which is to be found here, and the different style adopted in the play performed before the King:

"As one example of the many niceties of Shakspeare which have never been understood, I may allude to the style in which the speech of the player respecting Hecuba is conceived. It has been the subject of much controversy among the commentators, whether this was borrowed from Shakspeare himself or from others, and whether, in the praise of the piece of which it is supposed to be a part, he was speaking seriously, or merely meant to ridicule the tragical bombast of his contemporaries. It never occurred to them that this speech must not be judged of by itself, but in connection with the place where it is introduced. To distinguish it as dramatick poetry in the play itself, it was necessary that it should rise above the dignified poetry of that in the same proportion that the theatrical elevation does above simple nature. Hence Shakspeare has composed the play in Hamlet altogether in sententious rhymes, full of antithesis. But this solemn and measured tone did not suit a speech in which violent emotion ought to prevail; and the poet had no other expedient than the one of which he made use, overcharging the pathos." *Schlegel's Lectures on the Drama*, vol. ii. p. 196. BOSWELL.

"*Nor.* Now cracks a noble heart; good night, sweet prince;
"And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest." [P. 516.]

Let us review for a moment the behaviour of Hamlet, on the strength of which Horatio founds this eulogy, and recommends him to the patronage of angels.

Hamlet, at the command of his father's ghost, undertakes with seeming alacrity to revenge the murder; and declares he will banish all other thoughts from his mind. He makes, however, but one effort to keep his word, and that is, when he mistakes Polonius for the King. On another occasion, he defers his purpose till he can find an opportunity of taking his uncle when he is least prepared for death, that he may insure damnation to his soul. Though he assassinated Polonius by accident, yet he deliberately procures the execution of his school-fellows, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who appear not, from any circumstances in this play, to have been acquainted with the treacherous purposes of the mandate they were employed to carry. To embitter their fate, and hazard their punishment beyond the grave, he denies them even the few moments necessary for a brief confession of their sins. Their end (as he declares in a subsequent conversation with Horatio) gives him no concern, for they obtruded themselves into the service, and he thought he had a right to destroy them. From his brutal conduct toward Ophelia, he is not less accountable for her distraction and death. He interrupts the funeral designed in honour of this lady, at which both the

King and Queen were present; and, by such an outrage to decency, renders it still more necessary for the usurper to lay a second stratagem for his life, though the first had proved abortive. He insults the brother of the dead, and boasts of an affection for his sister, which before he had denied to her face, and yet at this very time must be considered as desirous of supporting the character of a madman, so that the openness of his confession is not to be imputed to him as a virtue. He apologizes to Horatio afterwards for the absurdity of this behaviour, to which, he says, he was provoked by that nobleness of fraternal grief, which, indeed, he ought rather to have applauded than condemned. Dr. Johnson has observed that to bring about a reconciliation with Laertes, he has availed himself of a dishonest fallacy; and to conclude, it is obvious to the most careless spectator or reader, that he kills the King at last to revenge himself, and not his father.

Hamlet cannot be said to have pursued his ends by very warrantable means; and if the poet, when he sacrificed him at last, meant to have enforced such a moral, it is not the worst that can be deduced from the play; for, as Maximus, in Beaumont and Fletcher's Valentinian, says—

"Although his justice were as white as truth,
"His way was crooked to it; that condemns him."

The late Dr. Akenside once observed to me, that the conduct of Hamlet was every way unnatural and indefensible, unless he were to be regarded as a young man whose intellects were in some degree impaired by his own misfortunes; by the death of his father, the loss of expected sovereignty, and a sense of shame resulting from the hasty and incestuous marriage of his mother.

I have dwelt the longer on this subject, because Hamlet seems to have been hitherto regarded as a hero not undeserving the pity of the audience; and because no writer on Shakspeare has taken the pains to point out the immoral tendency of his character.

STEEVENS.

Mr. Ritson controverts the justice of Mr. Steevens's strictures on the character of Hamlet, which he undertakes to defend. The arguments he makes use of for this purpose are too long to be here inserted, and therefore I shall content myself with referring to them. See Remarks, p. 217 to 224. REED.

Some of the charges here brought against Hamlet appear to me questionable at least, if not unfounded. I have already observed that in the novel on which this play is constructed, the ministers who by the king's order accompanied the young prince to England, and carried with them a packet in which his death was concerted, were apprized of its contents; and therefore we may *presume* that Shakspeare meant to describe their representatives, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, as equally criminal; as combining with the King to deprive Hamlet of his life. His procuring their execution therefore does not with certainty appear to

have been unprovoked cruelty, and *might* have been considered by him as necessary to his *future safety;* knowing, as he must have known, that they had devoted themselves to the service of the King in whatever he should command. The principle on which he acted, is ascertained by the following lines, from which also it may be inferred that the poet meant to represent Hamlet's school-fellows as privy to the plot against his life:

"There's letters seal'd: and my two school-fellows—
"Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
"They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
"And marshall me to knavery: Let it work,
"For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer
"Hoist with his own petar; and it shall go hard,
"But I will delve one yard below *their* mines,
"*And blow them to the moon.*"

Another charge is, that "he comes * to disturb the funeral of Ophelia:" but the fact is otherwise represented in the first scene of the fifth Act: for when the funeral procession appears, (which he does not seek, but finds,) he exclaims—

"The queen, the courtiers: *who is this they follow,*
"And with such maimed rites?"

nor does he know it to be the funeral of Ophelia, till Laertes mentions that the dead body was that of his sister.

I do not perceive that he is accountable for the madness of Ophelia. He did not mean to kill her father when concealed behind the arras, but the King: and still less did he intend to deprive her of her reason and her life: her subsequent distraction therefore can no otherwise be laid to his charge, than as an unforeseen consequence from his too ardently pursuing the object recommended to him by his father.

He appears to have been induced to leap into Ophelia's grave, not with a design to insult Laertes, but from his love to her (which then he had no reason to conceal), and from the *bravery of her brother's grief*, which excited him (not to condemn that brother, as has been stated, but) to *vie* with him in the expression of affection and sorrow:

"Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,
"Until my eyelids will no longer wag.—
"I lov'd Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
"Could not with all their quantity of love
"Make up my sum."

When Hamlet says, "the bravery of his grief did put me into a *towering passion*," I think, he means, into a lofty expression (not of *resentment* but) of *sorrow*. So, in King John, vol. xv. p. 256, n. 4.

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* —he comes—] The words stood thus in edit. 1778, &c. STEEVENS.

"She is *sad* and *passionate* at your highness' tent."

Again, more appositely in the play before us:

"The instant burst of clamour that she made,
"(Unless things mortal move them not at all,)
"Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
"And *passion* in the gods."

I may also add, that he neither assaulted, nor insulted Laertes, till that nobleman had cursed him, and seized him by the throat.

MALONE.

So far from being satisfied with the doubtful and hesitating reply of Mr. Malone to Mr. Steevens's note, I will venture to contend that the charges which that gentleman has brought against this drama in the present, and many other preceding notes, and which he has expressed with as much asperity as if he had had a personal quarrel with the author, are altogether without foundation. Nor is it a question of slight importance to our great poet's fame. His power in the delineation of character has placed him, in the opinion of his admirers, far above all other poets in this important respect. But that praise, if it is not altogether denied, must at least be subject to very considerable deductions; if in one of the noblest efforts of his muse, he has so completely failed, that the reader requires to be warned against the immoral tendency of a character which he evidently endeavoured to exhibit in an amiable point of view, and has closed his play with that affectionate tribute to its virtues in the mouth of Horatio, which has called down Mr. Steevens's indignation. As I may, perhaps, in some points have formed notions as to the poet's idea of Hamlet not altogether agreeing with my predecessors, I shall attempt shortly to state what impression it has made upon my mind, as it is developed in the progress of the drama. Hamlet, if I understand him rightly, is an amiable and accomplished prince, with ardent feelings and acute sensibility, of a benevolent disposition, and of a temper naturally gay till his spirit was broken by misfortune: but in his gaiety there was nothing frivolous; it was combined (as we often find it in men of genius) with habits of deep reflection. Hamlet is a man of highly cultivated genius; but the defect in his character, which furnishes us with a clue to his conduct, is a want of strength of mind and firmness of purpose. At the commencement of the play, the sudden death of his father, the seizure of the crown by his uncle, and the disgraceful marriage of his mother, have sunk him into a state of depression which unfits him for all the uses of this world. In this enfeebled state of mind he is informed by the awful vision of his father's spirit of the crime which had led to his death, and instigated to take vengeance on the murderer. His affection as a son makes him promptly and even enthusiastically undertake this office; but a consciousness of his own unfitness for it, almost instantly obtrudes itself on his mind:

" The time is out of joint; oh, cursed spight,
" That *ever I was born to set it* right!"

Of the feigned madness of Hamlet (says Johnson) there appears no adequate cause. With all my reverence for that great writer, I cannot but think that the cause is obvious. His father's spirit communicating such dreadful intelligence could not fail to throw him into a state of agitation which would have exposed him to the prying eyes of suspicious guilt, and might by the examination of Marcellus and Bernardo, whom it is plain he did not trust, have occasioned a disclosure which would have led to his destruction: but his feigned insanity serves to account for whatever is extraordinary in his demeanour. Whatever reasons can be assigned for the elder Brutus assuming a " cloak of folly," will serve much more strongly to explain the design of Hamlet. It has been suggested by Dr. Akenside, as Mr. Steevens observes, and the notion has of late years been revived, that the madness of Hamlet is not altogether feigned: but this I think entirely without foundation. The sentiments which fall from him in his soliloquies, or in confidential communication with Horatio, evince not only a sound, but an acute, and vigorous understanding. His misfortunes, indeed, and a sense of shame, from the hasty and incestuous marriage of his mother, have sunk him into a state of weakness and melancholy; but though his mind is enfeebled, it is by no means deranged. It would have been little in the manner of Shakspeare to introduce two persons in the same play whose intellects were disordered; but he has rather, in this instance, as in King Lear, a second time effected, what, as far as I can recollect, no other writer has even ventured to attempt,—the exhibition on the same scene of real and fictitious madness in contrast with each other. In carrying his design into execution, Hamlet feels no difficulty in imposing upon the king, whom he detests; or upon Polonius and his schoolfellows, whom he despises; but the case is very different indeed in his interviews with Ophelia: aware of the submissive mildness of her character, which leads her to be subject to the influence of her father and her brother, he cannot venture to entrust her with his secret. In her presence, therefore, he has not only to assume a disguise, but to restrain himself from those expressions of affection which a lover must find it most difficult to repress in the presence of his mistress. In this tumult of conflicting feelings he is led to overact his part from a fear of falling below it; and thus gives an appearance of rudeness and harshness to that which is in fact a painful struggle to conceal his tenderness.

In the mean time the arrival of the players at the court of Elsineur affords the poet an opportunity of giving us a retrospective sketch of Hamlet as he might have been seen in his happier days, when he was, as Ophelia describes him, the glass of fashion.

Reminded by their approach of an amusement, to which Shakspeare, with a natural fondness for his own art, represents this accomplished prince as being strongly attached, he forgets, for a moment, his calamities, and gives himself up to the recollection of former pleasure. He accosts them with joyous hilarity, and at the same time shows the kindness of his nature (a circumstance I think never lost sight of) by the interest which he takes in their concerns, which he evinces by his minute enquiries; but the dreadful subject which generally engrosses his mind, resumes its sway, and he proceeds to turn this incident into a means of ascertaining his uncle's guilt. Even the solemn communication which he has received from the dead can scarcely persuade him that so enormous a crime has been committed; for a benevolent and virtuous mind is slow to believe in the depravity of others. The opportunity which is presented to him of taking vengeance after his doubts have been removed, exhibits again that irresolution which forms so marked a part of his character: but he endeavours to impose upon himself; and attempts by a pretended refinement in revenge, to hide from his own knowledge his incurable habits of procrastination, and turns to an object much more congenial with the mildness of his character; an effort to awaken the conscience of his mother. Polonius behind the arras is mistaken for the king, who, he supposes, had placed himself there to detect him. A sense of immediate danger, united with indignation at the treachery which has been practised, supply that strong stimulus which is necessary to rouse him to exertion, and the poor old Lord Chamberlain receives the blow which was destined for his master. His rage at his disappointment suspends at first the softer feelings of his nature, but they soon return. "*He weeps for what is done.*" The king, alarmed at this new act of violence, enforces his orders that Hamlet should repair to England. A hero of romance would not have submitted; but Shakspeare has no heroes of romance. The prince knowing that resistance would be fruitless, yields to necessity, and embarks. The manner in which he escapes from the plot, which was formed against him by his uncle, has drawn forth the heaviest censure of Mr. Steevens. He maintains, p. 483, n. 4, that from Shakspeare's drama no proofs of the guilt of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern can be drawn. Mr. Malone has produced the old black letter history as expressly asserting their participation in the usurper's plans, and Hamlet's knowledge of that fact. To this it is replied that a *critick and a juryman* are bound to form their opinions on what they see and hear in the cause before them: and Mr. Steevens goes on to assert that it is not a commentator's office to interpret the plays of Shakspeare according to the novels on which they are founded. How far this position is well founded, may be a question with those who recollect how often the poet has left circumstances to be supplied by his readers, who were supposed to be familiarly acquainted with those popular story-books or histories

from which in general his plots were derived. But even if we were to recognise Mr. Steevens's new code of poetical justice, it appears to me, that there is sufficient evidence in the play itself to satisfy the minds of *good criticks and true.* Hamlet has, I think, very clearly intimated that he knew of their being engaged in some conspiracy against him, although he was unacquainted with its precise object till he had discovered it by an inspection of the letters which they conveyed. He speaks of them as "adders fanged," a term which would scarcely be applied to them if they were merely sycophants.

"—— 'tis the sport to have the engineer
"Hoist with *his own* petar."

This could not be said of the king, for *he* does not suffer from his own treachery being turned against him. What follows is still more explicit:

"———— it shall go hard,
"But I will delve one yard below *their mines,*
"And blow them to the moon."

The rapidity with which their execution is directed to take place, *not shriving time allowed,* is remarked by Mr. Steevens as "another proof of Hamlet's christian-like disposition." The answer is, that his own safety required it. If any delay had been allowed, the truth would probably have come out. The ambassadors might have had other credentials; but at all events, the story which they would have had to tell, would at once, by its evident probability, have overthrown that which it was necessary for Hamlet to produce. It might well be credited that the King of Denmark might wish the next heir to his crown to be secretly taken off; but it would have been hard to believe, if time had been allowed for consideration, that he should send an embassy of which his own nephew formed a part, with no higher object than the destruction of two obscure individuals. I need scarcely remind the reader that Hamlet's contrivance was formed when he expected to continue his voyage, which was only prevented by the attack from pirates. His conduct at the grave of Ophelia, has, I think, been much misunderstood. It appears to have been the first intelligence he had received of his mistress's death; the tumult of feelings which oppress him at that time, put him into "a towering passion," a frenzied state of excitement, which is evinced by the tumour of his language, so different from his usual style of speech, which, in general, as Johnson has truly observed, is not strained by poetical violence above the natural sentiments of man. At such a moment we cannot be surprised if the hasty insult offered to him by Laertes, should urge him to adopt conduct which he afterwards candidly and kindly regrets. I cannot entirely pass over the scene of the grave-diggers, which shows, in a striking point of view, his good-natured affability. The reflections which follow afford new proofs of his amiable character. The place where he stands,

the frame of his own thoughts, and the objects which surround him, suggest the vanity of all human pursuits; but there is nothing harsh or caustick in his satire; his observations are dictated rather by feelings of sorrow than of anger; and the sprightliness of his wit, which misfortune has repressed, but cannot altogether extinguish, has thrown over the whole a truly pathetic cast of humourous sadness. Those gleams of sun-shine, which serve only to show us the scattered fragments of a brilliant imagination, crushed and broken by calamity, are, to me at least, much more affecting than a long uninterrupted train of monotonous woe. Mr. Steevens concludes by saying, that it must be obvious to the most careless spectator or reader, that he kills the king at last to revenge himself, and not his father. If this be so, I must be careless indeed, for I cannot perceive it. When he finds that he is poisoned by his uncle's contrivance, he knows that if the present opportunity of revenging his father's death is not seized upon, it will be lost for ever; and the pressing emergency supplies, as I have before observed, that stimulus which is necessary to rouse him into exertion. Not one word of reproach escapes him against the treachery of Laertes, which he would naturally have inveighed against had his own fate been uppermost in his mind; and in his dying address to Horatio, no regret is expressed for the loss of life, but only an anxiety belonging to an honourable and lofty spirit lest he should leave behind him a wounded name.

A celebrated writer of Germany (Goethé) has very skilfully pointed out the defects in Hamlet's character which unfit him for the dreadful office to which he is called. "It is clear to me (he says), that Shakspeare's intention was to exhibit the effects of a great action, imposed as a duty upon a mind too feeble for its accomplishment. In this sense I find the character consistent throughout. Here is an oak tree planted in a china vase, proper only to receive the most delicate flowers. The roots strike out, and the vessel flies to pieces. A pure, noble, highly moral disposition, but without that energy of soul which constitutes the hero, sinks under a load which it can neither support, nor resolve to abandon altogether. *All* his obligations are sacred to him; but this alone is above his powers! An impossibility is required at his hands; not an impossibility in itself, but that which is so to him. Observe how he turns, shifts, hesitates, advances, and recedes! how he is continually reminded and reminding himself of his great commission, which he, nevertheless, in the end, seems almost entirely to lose sight of, and this without ever recovering his former tranquillity." *William Meister's Apprenticeship*, b. iv. ch. 13.

With this extract I was favoured by my friend Mr. Talbot.

To look for all the qualities which constitute the character of Hamlet, in any individual, would be nearly as hopeless as to seek

for a Falstaff in real life; but observation and history will readily supply us with examples of men, who, like him, though possessed of great talent, have been unequal to the difficulties of the situation into which they were thrown. Our own unfortunate monarch, Charles the First, may be cited as an instance. Had that prince been born in the eighteenth century, when our constitution was accurately defined, instead of being placed on an isthmus, between absolute prerogative and speculative freedom, he would probably have been a happy and a popular king. His taste, his love of literature, the goodness of his heart, and the purity of his private life, might have procured him some portion at least of that affectionate reverence which attended the career, and still hallows the memory, of GEORGE THE THIRD. BOSWELL.

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